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Idealism and Theology

The Donnellan Lectures, delivered before the University of Dublin, 1897-8

Idealism and Theology

A Study of Presuppositions.

By Charles F. d'Arcy, B.D.

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PREFACE

In these lectures an attempt is made to show that there isat work, in the seeming chaos of our philosophical thinking, an organising principle which promises to give new life to theology.

At present, while religion clings to the supernatural, philosophy seems to deny and theology hesitates. Religion takes refuge in mysticism. Thereupon theology finds courage to approve, and philosophy becomes oftily critical. But no one will venture to ay what exactly is the supernatural, and in hat sense mysticism is admissible.

A principle which the writer believes can discovered by means of a criticism of osophical idealism seems to provide an er to these questions. But it does m

if it be sound. It leads right into the very centre of theology, and reveals Christian theism as the highest and truest philosophy, the only philosophy which can deal fearlessly with the great fundamental difficulties which have proved fatal to all the metaphysical systems. Thus, the doctrine of God which we owe to Christianity becomes the greatest of all truths, the source of an illumination which spreads over the whole domain of knowledge. Every difficulty is found to be a revelation of God.

The writer has taken pains to enforce this central thought in every possible way. At the risk of being accused of repetition, he has not hesitated to pause from time to time in order to point out that every stage in the argument, taken separately, involves it. It is necessary to insist on this, for it is not to be imagined that the main result of this book is a conclusion which hangs at the end of a long chain of reasonings, and which inevitably falls to the ground if any link in

series prove unsound. On the contrary, from the very nature of the case, that result, if it be true, will manifest itself under all circumstances; it will be found everywhere, if we only look deep enough.

It is this fact which encourages the writer to put forward so slight and unworthy a statement of a scheme of thought which involves many vast problems.

Many recent works have afforded help. Especially Professor A. Seth's *Hegelianism and Personality*, Mr. F. H. Bradley's *Appearance and Reality*, and the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour's *Foundations of Belief*. The usefulness of others will be acknowledged when occasion demands. To these, on account of their suggestiveness in the present state of thought, a special tribute must be given. But the writer cannot throw upon any of them responsibility for the theory which forms the main argument of these lectures.

That theory is contained, in a very con-

densed form, in the author's *Short Study of Ethics* (part i., chap. v.); but the statement made there is too brief and too much subordinated to the ethical point of view for its theological meaning to become apparent.

It is possible that some from among the many who are impatient of prolonged metaphysical discussion may look into the following pages. Such readers may omit Lectures II. and III. and yet not lose the thread of the argument: the summary at the beginning of Lecture IV. will take the place of the omitted lectures.

Thanks are due to Mr. F. Purser, F.T.C.D., and Mr. N. Colgan for their great kindness in reading the proof-sheets and making several valuable corrections and observations, and to Professor Bernard for some important suggestions.

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INTRODUCTION

ROYAL BRANCH OF THE ASIATIC

INTRODUCTION.

In philosophical thinking there is nothing so important as gaining the right point of view. But this is not always an easy matter. The best rule is to take the path which leads through the social and intellectual controversies of the time; for, if the view which is sought is worth the seeking, it must have some vital connexion with the life of the period to which it belongs.

The controversy between matter and spirit might seem to be, in its nature, interminable. Taking its origin, as it does, from an opposition which is permanent in thought, it has existed for ages: one of the best statements of philosophical materialism, indeed, was made two thousand years ago. In recent years the controversy became the most pressing of all. The amazing growth and splendid successes of physical science seemed, for a time, to give materialism the advantage; but the louder assertion of its claims served only to arouse the inextinguishable counter-

claims of spirit. And so the controversy raged fiercely. Now, however, it shows signs of dying out; and it may be doubted if many remain who would profess a purely materialist creed. If the doctrine exists, it is rather as a passing phase of thought than as a settled conviction. For now-a-days every thinking man who really grapples with the problem is sure sooner or later to make the great discovery which renders materialism impossible. He finds himself driven to examine afresh a conception which has been all the while lying well nigh forgotten in the lumber-room of his mind; and then he is astonished to discover that what he has heard a hundred times, and ever rejected as unmeaning, is after all the truth which he most requires. That conception is the ego or self as the presupposition of all knowledge. The days are past when "the transcendental ego-business" was a subject of mockery. The persistent effort of those who learned at the feet of Kant, or rather, the truth of their doctrine, has overcome opposition, and, for the present at all events, materialism has been vanquished.

The words of Lotze, though perhaps not quite satisfactory from a higher point of view, well express the way in which the truth dawns. "The

decisive fact of experience that compels us in the explanation of mental life to put in the place of matter an immaterial form of being as the subject of the phenomena" is the "unity of consciousness, without which the sum-total of our internal states could not even become the object of our self-observation".[1] And, he points out, "our belief in the soul's unity rests not on our appearing to ourselves such a unity, but on our being able to appear to ourselves *at all*". "What a being appears to itself to be is not the important point; if it can appear anyhow to itself, or other things to it, it must be capable of unifying manifold phenomena in an absolute indivisibility of its nature. We are convinced of the indivisibility of our being by the fact that *anything* can appear to us."[2]

Analysis of the "acts of relating and comparing knowledge" leads more distinctly still to the same result. What is the relation between the colour and the scent of a rose? It is a relation created by the activity of consciousness. The mind apprehends each element separately through different senses, and then, while preserving to each

[1] *Microcosmus*, book ii., c. i., § 4, English translation.
[2] *Ibid.*, § 6.

its peculiar character, combines them without confusing them in its idea of the flower. Consciousness cannot then be regarded as a space in which various psychic elements act and react and combine according to the laws of their own nature. "That most peculiar bond of the multitudinous, the active element, that, passing from one to another, leaves both in existence, while it is aware of the kind and direction of its transition, cannot itself be multitudinous; as all actions are united only in the unity of an indivisible being in which they meet, so *a fortiori* does this special method of combining plurality require strict unity in the combining principle." [1]

Nor is this conclusion affected by the fact that of late years psychology has altered its phraseology, and now speaks of its datum of psychical fact as a stream or *continuum*. For the stream needs a channel in which to flow, the *continuum* demands an underlying unity to make it possible. Indeed, when rightly understood, recent psychology has only succeeded in emphasising the imperativeness of the intellectual necessity which drives us to believe in a unity of consciousness, which is neither constructed out of psychical

[1] *Microcosmus*, book ii., c. i., § 6, English translation.

elements nor explicable in terms of matter. The recently elaborated doctrine of apperception has thrown the activity of consciousness into the very strongest relief.

Reflections such as these show the impossibility of materialism. Spirit cannot be explained from the standpoint of matter; for explanation is an affair of knowledge, and, for knowledge, the unity of consciousness has been shown to be an ultimate fact. This is the condition of our knowing. If we are to know at all, it must be thus. If then matter be admitted as an original and inexplicable fact, an equal admission must be made on the side of spirit. Matter may win recognition by its appeal to the senses, but it cannot supplant spirit, for spirit is implied in the very fact that there is such a thing as recognition at all. We may theorise about matter, but just because we theorise, spirit is. We may be forced to believe in matter, but because we have to *believe*, spirit has its existence independently of matter. However the argument be turned, the subtle but irresistible claim of spirit intrudes and prevails. Materialism is impossible.

There are many who gladly follow the argu-

ment thus far. They like to reach a comfortable old-fashioned dualism. There is body and here is spirit. There is matter and here is mind. That is enough, let us be orthodox and rest. But spirit, when once its claim is recognised, will not permit us to rest here. The spiritual principle which has thus come to light is the most potent critical weapon ever forged. In the hands of T. H. Green it cut down all the respectable dualisms which were dear to our forefathers as well as the insolent materialism which, a generation ago, was frightening all the respectabilities. When matter itself is subjected to critical examination, it is discovered that there is not an element in it, or aspect of it, which is not dependent throughout on spiritual conditions. Its secondary qualities, to adopt the time-honoured distinction, its colour, taste, smell, etc., are sensations, and exist only where there is a mind to feel them. Its primary qualities, solidity, extension, figure, etc., are essentially "relational," and relations are the work of the mind. Thus matter may be shown to be utterly dependent on mind. There is indeed no avoiding the conclusion that matter is explicable in terms of mind, while mind is

absolutely inexplicable in terms of matter. But this is to state the result in too moderate a fashion. The full consequence of the critical examination of our experience of the material world is that matter as it is known to us is created by intelligence, by means of relations, out of elements which are essentially mental. The logical victory of idealism is complete. Not merely has materialism been vanquished, the dualism of mind and matter has been overcome, and mind remains master of the field.

It is worth noting that this result is the exact philosophical counterpart of what has been for centuries the prevailing and characteristic temper of modern European civilisation. The mind, intelligence, spirit, or however it be called, which is elevated to so great a position by the critical examination of experience, is, for every thinker, simply his own ego or self. It is the self-conscious subject of his own individual experience. This is the truth which makes the appeal to reason so irresistible. The man looks within and there finds as his own inalienable possession a principle, a first principle, which he cannot gainsay. That principle is Himself. For him nothing can be more fundamental, just

because it is this which gives the "for him" its meaning. This is indeed the very fountain-head of "meaning"; and there is no use asking questions or attempting answers on any other principle. Here is the rest for the lever which is to move the world.

The discovery of this principle is the most marked result of modern philosophy. Perhaps it is then not going too far to see in it the individualism of modern civilisation becoming fully conscious of itself. The right of the individual to think his own thoughts, to exercise his own reason, to refer all things to his own conscience, to live his own life, to realise himself, is the prevailing note of all that has been until now called modern. This is the spirit which animated the heroes of science, who refused to submit their reason to authority, the political leaders who contended for the rights of man, the philosophers who championed liberty, the religious enthusiasts who fought for the right of private judgment and the freedom of the individual conscience. Though these men as a rule rightly felt themselves the representatives of higher powers, and so gained strength for the struggles in which they engaged, yet implied in

all their thoughts and arguments, and in all the movements which they led, is one great principle: the ultimate reference of the individual spirit to itself as the ground of all explanation. The self-reference of the individual is the self-assertion of spirit. The ego is the underlying truth of all that has been termed modern thought and civilisation.

The materialist, who asserted his right to be a materialist, rested his claim upon the self-assertion of his own ego. In the position he assumed he refuted his own doctrine. The sceptic or agnostic, who persisted in setting authority at nought, affirmed the supremacy of that in him which questioned authority, and which doubted the accuracy of its teaching. His very scepticism was implicitly its own denial so far as it referred to the existence of spirit. No wonder, then, that after four centuries of triumphant individualism, the individual spirit should have discovered itself, and found in its own existence the refutation of materialism, and the means of overcoming the dualism of mind and matter. The only wonder is that the discovery took so long in the making. Even yet its meaning has not fully dawned on the majority

of thinking men. How true are the words of Hegel! Philosophy "makes its first appearance at a time when the actual fact has consummated its process of formation, and is now fully matured. . . . It is only when the actual world has reached its full fruition that the ideal rises to confront the reality, and builds up in the shape of an intellectual realm, that same world grasped in its substantial being. When philosophy paints its grey in grey, some one shape of life has meanwhile grown old: and grey in grey, though it brings it into knowledge, cannot make it young again. The owl of Minerva does not start upon its flight until the evening twilight has begun to fall."[1]

As against the dualism[2] of mind and matter, it may be held then that idealism has been successful. Mind, discovering itself to be the ego presupposed in all experience, has overcome matter, has asserted, that is, its own logical priority. No sooner, however, has this victory taken place than a new dualism springs

[1] *Philosophie des Rechts*, p. 20, translated by Wallace. *Prolegomena*, p. 29.

[2] This term is used as the description of an intellectual situation rather than the name of a doctrine.

into being. The opposition is now no longer between mind and matter. It is between the individual and society. The ego which overcame matter is the individual ego. In every case the argument prevails because it is addressed to the individual. If the man doubts the reality of spirit, he is told to look within and there to discover his own spirit, and to note how unfailingly it is creative of its experience. He looks and understands. For him materialism has henceforth lost its terror. But the victory of the spirit has taken place in a way which seems to introduce a new scepticism. If the ego is creative of its own experience, does not experience lose its reality? If mind makes nature, then is the world but a meaningless play of phantasms. The ego feels, thinks, relates, compares, and by means of the co-operation of these faculties a world results. But what is such a world? Is it not mere illusion? Experience is but another name for a long-continued dream, which is, for each man, his own private possession. Such a doctrine would amount practically to an unlimited scepticism.

Relief is found by recognising the truth that the world is a common possession. The experi-

ence to which appeal is made is not simply the experience of the individual. It is human experience as a whole, a domain in which each one has a share. The man must look upon himself as a member of a community. The experience which he calls his own has been to a great extent made for him by the joint labours of all other men. Idealism is not therefore to be condemned on the ground that it reduces all things to a mere show of subjective appearances. Further, all men live and move in a great universe which, in the highest sense, is greater than they. From the point of view of the universe, they are creatures, products of a power superior to themselves, a power which envelops them on every side, and from which they have arisen, it appears, by a process of evolution. But this universe is not to be regarded, from the point of view now reached, as material. That stage of thought was passed long ago. The character of the universe is known from the sample of it we get in experience. It is therefore essentially spiritual.

Whether this thought concerning the universe must be worked out until it becomes a belief in a personal Deity, a Deity concerning whom the best account we can have is derived from the

spiritual principle or self as it exists in each one of us, or whether it may be left indefinite as a species of pantheism, need not now be discussed.

The point of present importance is that philosophic thought has reached a new kind of dualism. On the one hand, strict logic seems to lead to individualism—the private ego claiming its universe as its own creation. On the other, common-sense and practical considerations so imperative that by no possibility can they be ignored, lead to belief in a spiritual world, a world in which a vast multitude of spiritual beings, an innumerable host of selves, coexist, and by their action and interaction create conditions which give to the individual self, in great part, its character and sphere of activity. Or, taking into consideration the supreme spiritual principle, the individual appears as simply a creature, owing its being and all that it possesses of character and dignity to spiritual forces other than itself. Not that it can any longer be regarded as the product of physical forces. Rather it is viewed as a stage in a spiritual development, a moment in the universal process, a particular point of view.

The new antagonism may be described as the conflict of individualism with the doctrine of social solidarity.

The champion of individualism, if he is daring enough to make full use of his logical advantages, occupies an impregnable position. He cannot be dislodged. For in argument appeal lies to the mind, and the mind is always for every thinker, in the last resort, his own ego. The principle of self-consciousness is the highest principle of explanation that logic can use, and self-consciousness, however you twist and turn it, can rise no higher than *self*.

In the region of ethics the individualist is equally unassailable. Conscience is for moral obligation what consciousness is for thought in general, and the individual conscience is apt to claim independence even more readily than the individual consciousness. The right of private judgment is secure, because if judgment, as judgment, submits to authority, it submits because it has first given its approval to the authority. If public conscience prevails over private conscience, it is by conviction not by compulsion, by acknowledging, that is, the authority of private conscience to be supreme within its own realm. It

is always on this ground that the martyr, or confessor, or reformer, takes his stand and wins his victories. The individualist can, therefore, both philosophically and ethically take up his position within fortifications which are absolutely impregnable.

If individualism is secure in the strength of its logical position, the doctrine of social solidarity is equally strong by reason of its hold upon common-sense, and upon practice and human life. The former, if it push its logic to the extreme, deifies the individual. The man creates his universe, yet no man, not insane, can identify his experience with the sum-total of all being. He must recognise a vast material and sentient creation surrounding him which conditions all his activities. He must believe in the existence of a countless multitude of other individuals, each of whom can make a universal claim precisely similar to his own. He must also discern a very large part of those possessions which seem to belong to him exclusively — his thoughts, character, volitional activities—to be due to the influence of others. He must, in fact, find himself to be, to a great degree, a product of nature and society.

Indeed, it is possible to attend so entirely to this side of his being that he may come to consider himself the creature of circumstances, with no originative powers which he can truly call his own. In the realm of thought, he will find that all the best of his mental possessions have come to him from education and from the social atmosphere in which he has lived. In the realm of conduct, he will find that the individual conscience is not the only thing to be considered. Justice, love, and all the principles which have been most effective as moralising agents, have their value just because they concern social relationship. Even the individual conscience needs to be trained and disciplined, and, so far as its content is concerned, formed by social experience. If it be true that no course of action can be accepted as right by the individual until conscience has approved of it, it is equally true that conscience gains its power of judgment by means of influences which are mainly social. The enlightened conscience is a conscience which has been well taught by society. And if it be asked what gives society its right to teach, the answer must be sought in some principle which is not peculiar to one individual, but common to all.

The philosophical antinomy which has thus come to light is not to be regarded as a conundrum propounded for the mystification of the curious. It is, though it may be ignored by some, the most pressing intellectual question of the day. But that is not all. It is the philosophical counterpart of the great social unrest of the latter half of the nineteenth century. The dualism of philosophy corresponds to a dualism in the life of the time. Individualism and social solidarity are not merely names descriptive of speculative theories. They also represent political parties, modes and types of character and conduct, and passions which at times threaten to become strong enough to rend states and disorganise society. Individualism is the lineal descendant of the old liberalism, the doctrine which exalted free thought and personal liberty, and desired for each a freedom of belief and of action limited only by the safety of life and property. Social solidarity is the creed of socialism in all its many forms. It is indeed the creed of many who cannot be described as socialists, of all who seek to subordinate the individual to the common good.

It is interesting to compare the new dualism

with the old. The old was a contest of free thought and the individual conscience with authority. But that was a very different thing from the modern contest of the individual with society. The old was the dualism of mind and matter, the new the dualism of self and society. To the old champions of liberty, authority seemed a great brute mass threatening to crush by size and weight, a mere unreasoning giant. Authority seemed a thing imposed from without upon intelligences which were designed for freedom. Though this was not strictly true from the highest point of view, so it seemed to a young and vigorous individualism. And from that particular standpoint the belief was not ill-founded, for individualism was the human mind discovering itself. In spite of the false materialistic theories which many of its adherents professed, the doctrine was the rising of the human self out of its obscurity, in order to become the light which would scatter the shadows of materialism. But when once that light dawned upon the world immediately there sprang into being a new dualism. It was no longer mind against matter, but mind (now become self) against society. Self having vanquished matter instantly found itself face to

face with a new and greater antagonist, a spiritual universe, a vast community of selves, which claimed the homage and complete subordination of every individual.

If the view here taken of the nature of the new dualism, and of its historical position, be at all sound, then it ought to be possible to find in it the summing up of all the old dualisms, and the explanation of whatever defect remained in the solution of each. The new dualism of self and society is the outcome of all the old dualisms and of the dealing of human thought with them. If human thought had been completely successful, perfect harmony would have been attained; no new dualism could have arisen. It is because thought was not quite successful, because there was in the old problems always some insoluble element, that another problem arose. The latest born dualism is therefore the net result of all its predecessors, and nothing can better assist to the understanding of it than consideration of its relation to them and to the solutions of them which satisfied, or seemed to satisfy, the minds of past generations.

The relation of the new dualism to the opposition of mind and matter has been already

considered. But it is not yet apparent perhaps how distinctly, from a philosophical point of view, the defect of the idealist solution of that problem lives in the new problem. Idealism prevailed against materialism by means of the discovery of what is implied in the existence and operation of the self-conscious subject of experience. But, as already pointed out, there was no way of crossing the chasm between mind and mind except by the bridge of common-sense. In strict logic every self excludes every other self. By appealing to the principle of self-consciousness man cuts himself off from his fellows. He even cuts himself off from God. And he has to assume the existence of a spirit-created world, similar in character to the world of his own experience, in order to justify his belief in nature. Although, then, the idealist does succeed in solving the problem of matter by showing that every element in the material universe is spiritual in its nature or origin, he does not altogether dispose of the question; because, if he follows consistently his own methods, he only succeeds in shutting up all reality within the bounds of his own self-consciousness. To escape from this preposterous

result he has to do violence to his own principles, and allow common-sense to prevail. But when he has allowed common-sense to prevail, and has by so doing escaped from the prison of his own personality, he cannot go backwards. He has proved the spiritual nature of every element in the universe, and so, if he is to obey common-sense, as he must, and admit the existence of a world of things in space and time independent of his own, and of every human experience, he must find himself committed to a belief in a universal spiritual principle as the source of all that we call the universe. And he must certainly believe in the existence of other human selves who, equally with himself, possess the world-creating faculty of self-consciousness. Thus the defect in the idealist argument against materialism leads directly to the dualism of self and society, self over against a multitude of other selves. And, let it be noted, this dualism rests on a true antinomy. The passage from the individual self to the multitude of other selves is not effected by a harmonious development of thought. It is the result of an act of violence on the part of common-sense.

This argument may be put briefly in another way. If the universe contained a single ego only, the opposition of matter to mind would cease. In the philosophic contemplation of that one mind material things in all their variety would be seen to be elements in one harmonious spiritual whole, and therefore could be completely accounted for by reference to the activity of the one spirit.

Another of the great antinomies which have for ages perplexed human thought is the opposition of free will and necessity. In its dealing with this problem, idealism seemed to have yielded most valuable results. Its conception of self-determination appears always to the student who has grasped it for the first time the most admirable solution of the great question. Freedom is the truth of necessity. There is no contradiction between the two principles. Each may be allowed full play. All depends on the point of view. Necessity reigns within experience. Every element is bound to every other element by the links of an iron net-work. Necessity is determination from without, determination by the not-self. It belongs therefore to whatever has a "without". If a thing has

relation with other things outside itself, that relation is a necessary one. And, as all things in experience are related to one another, there can be no limit, within experience, to the domain of necessity. But when experience is considered as a whole all is changed. As a whole experience is included within the bounds of the self. It is due to the activity of the self. Now the self cannot be bound from without, because, for the self, nothing in experience is without. If a thing exists for the self it exists within experience. It is therefore but an element in the net-work of relations which is due to the activity of the self. That activity cannot then be determined from without, by the not-self. It is self-determined. Self-determination is therefore of the essence of spiritual activity. The same facts are necessary, when regarded in their relation to one another as elements in experience; they are due to self-determination or freedom, when regarded as a whole, from the point of view of the self.

This solution of the problem would be perfect if the universe contained but one thinking self. But difficulty arises at once when we take into consideration the existence of a multitude of

selves which must be regarded as "outside" the thinker. If all these selves are related to one another, as we cannot help thinking them to be, what becomes of the distinction just explained? Is it not inevitable that we must think of these relations as necessary? The truth is, that the moment we rise to a position in which we find ourselves face to face with the new dualism, the opposition of the one spirit to the many spirits, our old difficulty comes back upon us in a new form. The new antinomy is, in fact, once again seen to be the legitimate outcome of the old. The weak point of the idealist system has given way, and out of the breach has come forth a problem with which idealism is unable to deal.

There is another antinomy which it may be well to touch upon in this connexion. The old puzzle concerning good and evil is the greatest, the oldest, and the most tremendous of all philosophical problems. The idealist treatment of this question is well known, and is commonly felt to be the least satisfactory part of that philosophy. To regard evil as a stage in the development of the good does not square with human experience. But, apart from the

discussion of that question, the idealist system cannot explain moral evil. Moral evil is the opposition of private will to universal will, whether the latter be regarded as Divine will or as the good of society. Here again the problem consists in a conflict between the one self and the many. Evil is selfishness. Good is the identification of self with all other selves, including the highest. Now it is obvious at once that it is only the multitude of selves which makes the problem possible. If in all the wide domain of being there were but one person, if, that is, the private became the universal, the opposition would lose its meaning, evil would be impossible.

Thus in another and most remarkable instance the new dualism is shown to be the outcome of the old. It is the highest of all, the one into which the others are found to resolve themselves under the influence of modern idealist thought.

The main duty of philosophy at the present time is surely to grapple with the great question which thus comes to light. And philosophy has not been altogether unmindful of its duty. While most modern philosophers have either avoided or dealt

vaguely with the question, the late Professor T. H. Green boldly undertook it. His treatment is to be found in the earlier portion of his *Prolegomena to Ethics*. That he was successful cannot now be admitted. It is acknowledged, almost universally, that his critical work is conclusive. But there is an equally strong consensus of opinion that his constructive work is not completely satisfactory. And the weak point occurs where he deals with the problem which is now before us. His position is that the spiritual principle which operates in nature reproduces itself gradually and with interruptions in every individual human thinker. Thus he endeavours to overcome the opposition between God and man, and between the man and his human neighbours, by identifying all selves. According to him it is the one and the same spiritual principle which lives and moves in all consciousnesses. The ego in man is, in fact, to be identified with God.

Such a doctrine could not be entertained for a moment were it not that, as Professor Green states it, it seems to deal with abstractions. The spiritual principle comes to be regarded as a kind of abstract law, like a mathematical formula, which operates in all experiences. But

the spiritual principle is in every case the self, and the self cannot be abstract, because abstraction is the work of the self. In every process of abstraction the self is presupposed. Wherever an abstract element of any kind exists, there the self has been at work. Professor Green's way of treating the self, at one time as the self-conscious subject presupposed in individual experience, and at another time as a spiritual principle capable of operating in all experiences, shows that he had not thoroughly worked out his own philosophical theory. For, in the former case, the ego is the most concrete thing which thought can deal with; in the latter case it is regarded as an abstraction. The mind of every cultivated person is accustomed to abstract principles which can be applied to an indefinitely great number of particular cases, and so when, in following a philosophical argument, the reader is asked to think of a spiritual principle which reproduces itself in all experiences, he sees no difficulty. But when he discovers that this spiritual principle is, in his own case, his ego, his self, he becomes aware that something is wrong, perhaps without seeing where exactly the error lies.

The other efforts which have been made to deal with this great question are so vague that there would be little profit in delaying to examine them now. It has been necessary to touch on Professor Green's doctrine, partly because it is the most widely known, and partly because it leads right to the centre of the discussion and lays bare the real problem.

The difficulties which have thus come to light and which, as we have seen, are so closely connected that they may be treated as one, under the title of the new dualism, form the true text of the following lectures. Much that has been here indicated briefly will be again referred to. Three points especially will be touched on. First, the fact that common-sense asserts itself against idealism and forces us to break through the bounds of individual experience. Or, putting the same thing otherwise, the fact that other spirits and other experiences besides the individual thinker and his experience, must be assumed to exist and must be accounted for. Secondly, the fact that idealism, in spite of its amazing promise, did not succeed in solving the problem of freedom and necessity. Thirdly, the mystery of evil and the fact that it remains still a

mystery after all that idealism has said on the subject.

In these lectures we seek the meaning of these facts. And, put briefly, the result at which we shall arrive is, in the main, this: The failure of idealism leads to a mode of thought concerning ultimate truth which is identical with the central doctrine of Christian theology. It would be absurd, and indeed shameful, to throw stones at modern idealism. It has proved itself to be a noble philosophy. To it Christianity owes more than to any other phase of modern metaphysical thought. As against materialism, idealism is true. But, it is here contended, Christian theism is truer still. Examination of the defects of the first led to the second, and examination of the defects of the second will be found to lead to the third. Christian theism is the final philosophy.

Modern idealism is not then to be disparaged. It is, from our point of view, to be treated with infinite respect, because it is the true stepping-stone to the appreciation of the philosophical value of theology. Christian theism, regarded as a philosophy, is to be established, not by overthrowing idealism and then building up

another erection in its place, but by making use of idealism in order to gain a higher position. When that has been accomplished, all that is valuable in idealism will be found to have taken its place in the higher system. And so it is that all through this introduction our thought has run on the lines laid down by Hegelianism. We have found a new dualism arise out of the defect in the preceding philosophical synthesis, and if we have been forced to criticise the Hegelian position, it has been for reasons which Hegel himself, more than any other master, has taught us to understand. But, it may be said, the very fact that all through we have been reasoning on the ground that there is a universal stream of thought by which new developments are brought about, is an implicit acceptance of idealist philosophy. The only answer which can be made now is, that if the following course of lectures does not help us to discern and to justify the existence of such a stream of thought it will have failed in attaining the purpose for which it has been undertaken.

As to method, it will be sufficient to state that these lectures contain a study of presuppositions. In our discussion we shall follow

[redacted]thod of argument which Kant taught to all students of philosophy. Taking facts as they are, we shall endeavour to work back to the principles which underlie them, the presuppositions on which they rest. Just as idealism showed that in every element in the material world there is implied a spiritual principle which is required to make it possible, so shall we seek to make plain the principles which underlie the possibility of a spiritual universe in which mind stands over against mind, and will against will.

But as the object of these lectures is distinctly theological as well as philosophical, we are bound to consider the presuppositions of religion as well as those of human experience. It is interesting to consider that theology was formed by an instinctive and unconscious application to the facts of Christian experience, of the very philosophical method which was afterwards taught by Kant. This is mere matter of history. Christian theology was not an elaborately constructed pile of propositions erected upon the basis of certain facts and statements laid down by authority. Its propositions always represent the positions upon which controversy with heretics drove back

the orthodox. The orthodox were simply [redacted] who would not give up any portion of the domain of Christian consciousness and experience. The heretics were always men with a theory who insisted on fitting the facts into their theory. Theology began without any articulate theory, and was led to form one by the mere fact of having to reject one inadequate theory after another. Thus it was driven back on that set of propositions which is implied in the facts and experiences which constitute the very being of the Christian religion. The history of theology is the history of the discovery of certain presuppositions.

It must be admitted, of course, that in the writings of many great theologians a very different course is followed. There we find effort after effort to construct a dogmatic edifice. But these efforts are always attempts to justify to the mind, and by the logic, of the day in which, they were made, a scheme of thought which had come to the writers ready-made with all the authority of the Christian past.

At last philosophic thought has come to understand and to use the logical method which worked unconsciously throughout the ages of

early Christian history, and every theological student who desires to fashion his thoughts after the mode which corresponds to the best thinking of the present day must do in brief what was done at length by generation after generation of the earlier times. To make a just comparison then between philosophy and Christian theology, it is necessary to consider both as presuppositions. The former is the scheme of thought presupposed by human experience as a whole; the latter is the scheme of thought presupposed by the Christian religion.

It is the aim of these lectures to show that the two schemes of thought will in their final principle prove to be identical. So far as our investigation on the lines already laid down can carry us, it will be found that the highest conception we can attain by means of a criticism of idealism, is the very core of the theology implied in Christianity, when that religion is admitted to be what it professes to be. We have here nothing to do with a philosophised Christianity —a Christianity which has been passed through the sieve of some particular set of metaphysical or physical conceptions. Christianity professes to be a supernatural religion, and as such we

shall take it, and, when we have reached the presuppositions which underlie it, we shall find they are the very principles to which our philosophical argument has led us.

Let it not be imagined that this way of stating the case is a subtle piece of special pleading, and that the argument of these lectures is one made to the order of orthodoxy. Precisely the reverse is the case. The writer was led to this position from the philosophical side while working at the basis of ethics.

It has not perhaps been sufficiently considered that the vast multitude of men accept by a great act of faith the ethical creed which rules the life of the nations, and that the business of the moral philosopher is much more to analyse, to systematise, and to define what that faith receives than to provide a scientific justification. But no ethical thinker who lives up to his intellectual privileges will be content to omit altogether the consideration of the ultimate question. Labour however as he may he will not be able to make his scientific justification perfect. He can never reach a position in which mere logic, that namely which is through and through clear to the intelligence, will be found a sufficient account of the

matter. There will always be a residuum of faith; and that residuum will be concerned with one great topic: the identification of the individual with the universal good. Why must "I" sacrifice "my" interests for the interests of all? How can it be shown that the good of one is the good of all?

It is no doubt very easy and very proper to say that the faculty of "reason" provides the necessary justification. But the question is, how is this "reason" to be distinguished from faith and from the reason which justifies science? Into this question we shall enter later on. Meanwhile let it be remembered that no one ever really disposes of a great question by affixing another name to it. Unless this reason which is the ultimate justification of morality can be shown to be identical with the faculty which ranges through the whole series of the mathematical and physical sciences, we have not got rid of the element of faith by intruding the name of reason.

It is not meant to suggest that the mind consists of a number of separate faculties lying side by side like so many instruments in a box. The reason which justifies altruism is no doubt the

same reason as that which justifies science. That is, it is the same unifying ego which operates in both cases. The point is that the mode of operation is different. In its scientific uses reason is consistent within the limits which belong to its subject-matter. In its ethical use it is also consistent, or aims at being so, within the limits of ethic. But in the endeavour to bring ethics into line with all its other work so as to create a scheme of thought which shall be "all one piece," it meets with a difficulty which cannot be overcome except by a great act of faith. It has to pass from an experience which belongs to one self to a world in which a number of separate and mutually exclusive selves have to adjust their relations and come to terms. And the passage from the one kind of experience to the other can be made by an act of faith only.

When it is said that in its scientific work reason deals with an experience which belongs to but one self, what is meant is that the whole system of relations with which any science deals is regarded from one point of view, that is, it is viewed as all under one ego, one unifying principle. To this subject we shall return.

There is one question which is now-a-days of vast importance: How does your theory square with the conception of evolution? To some the view that the individual ego[1] "makes" its own experience, that the physical world so far as it exists for any person is the work of that person's consciousness, is quite inconsistent with the doctrine of the "descent of man". When did the nature-making faculty first show itself? Were "our simian ancestors wholly devoid of it"? "Is feeling conceivable apart from a *subject* that feels? Surely then the lower animals must belong to the same plane of reality as that which man occupies."

These are grave questions, if idealism[2] is regarded as a completed philosophy. To us, however, they are important, simply because they bring to light, in a new way, the very defect which we have found it necessary to insist upon all along. We have seen that if idealism is to

[1] Professor Upton in review of "A Short Study of Ethics" in *The New World* for March, 1897.

[2] Idealism, as conceived by Hegel and his school, is essentially a doctrine of evolution. The objection considered here is more especially applicable to those forms of theory which lay stress upon the work of the Ego. But all forms of idealism are open to attack from this side if they endeavour to be consistent, as will appear later on.

be consistent, it must cling to the individual ego as its principle of explanation. Then the lower stages of development, in which there is sentience without consciousness, must form an insuperable difficulty. To exhibit this difficulty it is not necessary even to adopt the doctrine of the descent of man. It is enough to point out that the lower animals cannot be credited with the possession of self-consciousness, and yet must have some inner life of their own. And if a consistent idealism cannot account for these facts, then so much the worse for idealism.

There is here, however, no additional difficulty. If it is shown that the idealist principle, *i.e.*, the ego, is unequal to the explanation of the multitude of human spirits, it is unnecessary to dwell upon the fact that lower forms of being, which lie outside the experience of the individual thinker, are also inexplicable by reference to the ego. The greater includes the less. Whatever argument can be founded on the existence of animal sentience is but a part of the greater argument that the existence of other selves reveals the insufficiency of the idealist principle of explanation. If the latter consideration drives us to demand a higher philosophy than idealism,

then this higher philosophy will be found to account for the facts which support the former.

The sentience of animals is not then an objection to the principle that the individual ego "makes" its own experience. But it is an objection to the doctrine that this principle provides a complete philosophy.

As to the greater question which concerns the theory of evolution as a whole, and our attitude towards it, the following pages will, it is hoped, show that the presuppositions of religion are, to say the least, not inconsistent with the principles involved in that view of the history of nature which is characteristic of modern times.

From the Christian point of view, theology should be the ultimate philosophy. Strictly speaking, theology must mean a doctrine of God; and if a doctrine of God is possible it must be the highest and most comprehensive of all truths. Now Christianity professes to possess such a doctrine. In the way already indicated a great statement concerning the Divine nature was framed in the earlier centuries of Christian thought. And the doctrinal position which was then reached has always been maintained by the great body of those who call themselves by the

Christian name. Yet, too often, this position has been held rather because it was felt that to depart from it would be a dangerous innovation, than because it was discerned to be the centre of all religious thought. If the doctrine of the Trinity is sound then it must be the corner-stone of the whole temple of theology; it must be the highest principle of theological explanation; the key to all this is puzzling in our thoughts concerning the higher problems of religion and human life. Yet it is often regarded as a dogma which cannot indeed be avoided but which has to be accepted painfully, with doubt and hesitation. Instead of looking to it for light the student seeks to have light thrown upon it.

The principal reason of this is perhaps to be found in the fact that many Christian apologists are content to adopt a Unitarian tone of thought while they are discussing what is usually called natural theology. While moving in the region of revealed religion they are ardent Trinitarians, but the moment they approach the general problem of theism they put on a mode of thinking which is essentially Unitarian. God becomes for them simply a spirit or person. They are

very much interested in proving the existence of this one great Person from design, it may be, or by metaphysical argument. But as soon as they have succeeded, or apparently succeeded, in doing this, difficulty arises. The doctrine they have reached, however noble and impressive, is not Christian. It is not in harmony with the facts of the Christian revelation, nor with the Christian consciousness. It does not serve as the presupposition of supernatural religion. Thus the philosophy of our ordinary theological teaching comes to be out of harmony with the dogmatic scheme which tradition has handed down and which Christian experience requires. The conception of the Divine nature which satisfies the intelligence does not correspond with the thoughts concerning God which religion demands.[1]

The purpose of these lectures is to show that the reasonings which are usually called natural theology, lead to a conception of the Deity which is essentially Christian. On the philosophical

[1] Dr. J. H. Kennedy, in his valuable work, *Natural Theology and Modern Thought*, notes (p. 273) that some objections which are made to Theism by Mr. Herbert Spencer and others are really objections to Unitarianism and not to the Christian doctrine.

side, the argument may be regarded as a criticism of the current idealism (the only philosophy which can now be truly called living). On the theological side, it will be maintained that the principle involved in the doctrine of the Trinity is the principle of supernatural religion. This, it will appear, is the principle which emerges when the nature of the difficulties which at present beset philosophical thought is fully recognised.

Let it not be supposed that any effort is to be made to indicate in detail the various functions of the persons of the Blessed Trinity, or to show reason, from the nature of things, why there should be *three* Persons, just three and only three. These are problems and subtleties which do not enter into our discussion. If they are to be discussed at all, it must be on the basis of revelation. We are concerned mainly with the principle which underlies the multiplicity of Persons in the unity of the Godhead, with the conception, that is, of Deity as a unity of persons instead of a personal unity. We are also concerned with the manner in which philosophy is driven back on that principle, and supernatural religion takes its origin and justification from it. The philosophical problem with which we have to deal

may be thrown into a single question: How can man retain his manhood in all the fulness of its spiritual endowment, and how at the same time can God be All in all? The answer to that question will be found to yield the fundamental principle of Christian theology.

Christian theology has in recent years shown a marked tendency to return to the form which belonged to it in its early Alexandrian days. The Augustinian theology, the scheme of thought which prevailed in the West and which governed equally Rome and Geneva, Aquinas and Calvin, seems to be yielding place, at least in many of the finer minds, to a system which resembles in the most remarkable manner the thought of Clement and Athanasius. The leading idea of this new-old theology is the immanence of God. The leading idea of the Augustinian system is the transcendence of God. The one emphasises the organic connexion which subsists between God and man, and views incarnation and redemption in the light of that thought. The other dwells upon the separation of God and man, and labours with the awful problems of sin and atonement.

This revival of the old Greek theology is not

surprising. As stoicism influenced the minds of the Christian theologians of the early centuries, so does idealism in its Hegelian form influence the theological intelligence of the present day. The ruling thought is the same in both—the immanence of Deity in nature and humanity.

Some modern advocates of this revival have spoken hard words against the Augustinians and against the whole theology of the West.[1] But language of this kind is not justifiable. The Alexandrian doctrine of immanence was too vague to be finally satisfactory. Further definition was inevitable. Definition was bound to grapple with the relation between God and man, and with the problems of sin and free will. These problems were forced to the front by the Pelagian controversy. The human individual had to be dealt with. In the East he is apt to be forgotten. In the West he never fails to assert himself. The Augustinian theology resulted from the contact of the Divine philosophy of the East with the practical individualism of the West. It was, therefore, no mere darkening of the sun,

[1] Notably Professor A. V. G. Allen in his *Continuity of Christian Thought*. See Introduction and chapter ii., especially pp. 157-168.

by the clouds of superstition. It was a real effort to solve certain great and inevitable problems.

On the whole, the Greek theology corresponds to the point of view of the Divine unity. Its leading thought is a high philosophic one—God All and in all. The Western theology has its eye ever fixed on the needs of the human person —his sins, his repentance, his reconciliation. Even when it denies the freedom of the will, its denial proceeds from its recognition of the awful meaning and terrible insistence of the claim of the individual.

Advance in theology will not then consist in a mere return to the Alexandrian position. It will consist rather in the discovery that the deeper and more characteristic elements in Christian thought reveal, to the modern mind which views them fairly, meanings which comprehend the truths which both theologies laboured to express. It must be a synthesis of the opposing elements or it will not constitute a truly progressive movement. It will teach us more deeply concerning the immanence of God, and it will make us realise more fully His transcendence. It will reveal Him as the All in all, and for man

it will preserve intact the high privilege of individuality.

If the results of our labours in these lec be found to point at all in the direction of a synthesis, the fact must be admitted to favourable omen, for our method is not to eclectic but critical.

There are many now-a-days who strive to mi mise the importance of theology. In every ot respect systematic thinking is admittedly order of the day. In religion alone it is avoid Yet, after all, when the question *Is it tru* is asked concerning religion, theology becom inevitable. It is all very well to show th religion is beautiful or useful, or to point o how strongly it appeals to the emotions or ho it satisfies human needs. Such demonstrati is no doubt good. But some time or other t question must be asked: *Is it true?* Does G indeed exist? Does He now and ever sear our hearts? Do we really live and move Him? Is Christ Divine? Is He in truth t Living One, that was dead, and is alive f evermore? Is His promise of eternal life to depended on? Is prayer as real a thing as t cry of a child to his earthly father? Can it

truly call down the needed gift? And what of heaven and hell?

Such artless questionings as these have more value than all the hazy subtleties of the day; for the simple reason that they touch the main point. And the moment a genuine effort is made to answer them theology begins. Every thinking man to whom religion is a reality must then be something of a theologian. Unless he has put his intelligence altogether to sleep he must have framed for himself or adopted certain leading conceptions, more or less consistent, which he believes to correspond with the truth of things. Is he justified in his belief? Are the thoughts concerning God and man which our traditional creed has taught us to think, justifiable; are they true? Here is a question for every mind, and the answer to it implies a theology.

But, while there must be theology, life can be lived, duty done, and faith truly held, without a thorough investigation of these great problems. For the very station which each one occupies supplies at once a work and principles which must correspond with that work more or less perfectly. In doing the work, in living the

life, the creed is learned and understood and verified. And without being a systematic thinker, the man has proved his theology. So it is that the creed of Christianity maintains its hold upon the minds of men. Thus has it stood the test of two sceptical centuries. And to-day, when we set ourselves to the study of theology, we are not dissecting the dead, we are seeking to understand the living.

LECTURE I.

NATURALISM AND IDEALISM.

Thou believest that God is one; Thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble (James ii. 19).

ACCORDING to many eminent authorities of the present time the days of the supernatural are numbered. Nor is this the opinion of the profane multitude of scoffers and sceptics only. It is asserted or implied by many reverently-minded and religiously-spoken persons who claim to be Christians. It is even possible to find writers who profess to believe in God and immortality, in Christ and the incarnation, and who yet declare that the supernatural must be eliminated from history, from nature, and from our religious

great drifts of modern thought have been in the direction of this negation; one connected with physical science, the other with the study of history. The influence of the first is about that long series of attacks on

Christianity as a miraculous system which was met by the copious apologetic literature of the last two centuries. The second, represented most remarkably by the extreme forms of what is called the higher criticism of the Old Testament, has only just now caught the ear of the world at large. Both explain in terms of natural causation. The one regards nature as a series of regular effects produced necessarily by certain pre-existing causes. The other regards history as a branch of science, and labours to find in all great human movements the natural and inevitable outcome of the conditions under which the various races existed.

One supreme thought dominates both; th idea of natural evolution. From star-cloud civilisation, all is the result of slow developme of gradual growth by means of the integratio minute differences. There are no interfere by superior power, no gaps for mystery to upon and claim as her own, no facts whic be regarded as permanently inexplicable. not, of course, contended that the whole of changes from the beginning until no been fully catalogued and described, and completed induction warrants the conclus

is possible, as all know, to point out certain very apparent gaps in the series. Those who choose can say: Here at the beginning of motion, and here at the beginning of life, and here at the beginning of consciousness, and many times more for all we know, Divine interference must have taken place; for the natural series seems hopelessly broken.

But the naturalistic argument is not so much troubled by the objection as it might seem that it ought to be; for it has ready a very effective answer. It belongs to the essence of science to go on the assumption that all facts are explicable by reference to natural causes. Science assumes the series of natural effects to be unbroken, and slowly and surely she has been verifying the accuracy of her basal assumption. To point out gaps which have not yet been filled is merely to indicate problems which have yet to be solved, and it is surely premature for any one to assert that these problems are insoluble.

There is no doubt that with regard to some of the instances mentioned a good answer can be made to this argument, but the broad fact remains that science has justified her claims by

a most glorious career of conquest, and that every fresh victory strengthens her position, and enables her to view with complacency the whole domain of fact as potentially hers.

The kind of thought which has now been described has been, not inaptly, termed Naturalism. The name has the advantage of indicating a characteristic which, for the student of theology, is most important: the exclusion of the supernatural. Naturalism involves the negation of creative interference in nature and of miracle in history. It also implies, though more obscurely, the extrusion of all supernatural elements from ordinary spiritual experience—prayer becomes unmeaning, freewill becomes a polite fiction, even God and immortality fade away into shadows.

Refuge from these destructive results has been found by many in the revival of idealist philosophy. The spiritual principle revealed in the human consciousness is exalted to the throne of the universe and there found to be a gracious and harmonising principle. The spiritual is restored and at the same time naturalism is given its full swing. The charm of reconciliation explains the power which the doctrine exerts

upon the minds of those who have grasped its meaning. Under the influence of this charm the defect in the proof of idealism already pointed out[1] is lost sight of. By boldly assuming the central position and exhibiting its "sweet reasonableness" in the character of peacemaker, the spiritual principle seems to rise above criticism. And, indeed, if it can truly adopt this attitude and show all the kingdoms of the universe in one view as a consistent whole, its claim to sovereignty is made out, and opposition is silenced. In dealing with naturalism it seems to effect great things. Science receives the very fullest justification, and to natural law is conceded all that it can possibly demand. The whole domain of fact from end to end, nature and history in their widest extent, all is given over to the sway of natural evolution. But the spiritual is not surrendered. It is always to be discovered at the highest point of view.

The supernatural only has perished. No longer are we to seek for interferences in nature or miracles in history; no more are we to attempt to find, in the experience of the individual, a volitional power which can master circumstances,

[1] See Introduction, p. 20.

If there be miracle, it is the miracle of the whole; if there be providence, it is the providence which makes the great end, the final good, the controlling principle of all temporal progress; if there be freedom, it is the self-determination of the absolute, which is simply a higher way of looking at necessity. In truth, the idealism which is now in the ascendant is simply a translated naturalism. It is naturalism standing on its head. The necessity which pervades nature becomes, by an inevitable transition of thought,[1] the freedom of the absolute. And the more perfect the necessity of the one, the more perfect the freedom of the other, for the two are correlative. Now, since idealism is bound to regard the absolute as possessed of perfect freedom, unfettered self-determination, it is, *ipso facto*, bound to regard nature as hopelessly tied in the chain of necessity. Miracle becomes, not improbable, but impossible. For the imperfect induction by which naturalism renders the supernatural unlikely, idealism substitutes an iron deduction which renders it impossible.

Very similar is the treatment which idealism of this kind gives the individual spirit. Natu-

[1] See Introduction, p. 22.

ralism makes it appear probable that the individual is a mere vortex in the stream of natural causes, apparently self-centred, really a creature born of the current and the obstructions which impede its course, and destined to a speedy dissolution. Idealism makes this a certainty; the individual, from its point of view, becomes a mere stage in a process. Nor does it help him to rise above this position that the process, as a whole, demands a spiritual explanation.

The one element in religion as generally understood which idealism seems to rescue from the general ruin is belief in God. For it God becomes All in all. He is absolute spirit. He is self-conscious and self-determining. He is wise and free just because He is all-inclusive. All process must find its explanation in Him. Here we have the secret of the power which idealism is at present exercising over many minds. It is restoring to them their faith in God. It is teaching them to discern the spiritual in all things. It is revealing God as the One in whom we live and move and have our being; showing them that God is very near to them, the truth of their own inner life as well as of the great world of material things which

lies around them. And, above all, idealism seems to many at the present time a veritable gospel because it is implicit in all the teachings of science. Let science push her conquests to the very farthest bounds of possibility, and every step of her progress constitutes an additional proof that, in all and through all, there lives and works one free Divine Spirit, one eternal reason. Here is no opposition between science and religion, here is perfect harmony.

But surely the satisfaction which is derived from this most splendid view must be sadly spoiled when thought turns to the consideration of the relation between God and the individual spirit. The vast all-including net of necessity which finds its explanation in God must include the individual. If the principles of this philosophy are to be consistently maintained, man is not a free spirit who stands over against God. He is rather an element in the life of God, a stage in that universal process. Like the stone, or the plant, or the mere animal, man occupies a definite place in the cosmic system. He is in the system, not above it. The self-consciousness and freedom of God are implied in the stone and the fish as well as in the man. Only in the man

this consciousness has become aware of itself. In man God knows Himself and knows His freedom. But this does not mean that human life is lifted out of the stream of necessity. Rather, it means that the inner truth of things, the essential nature of God, is beginning to shine through. But this inner truth does not belong to man as an individual. It belongs to the whole, to God in all His fulness. Man loses his life that God may gain His. There is here no surrender of love, no yielding of mind to mind, of will to will. There is rather a Divine operator forging His human instrument and wearing it out in the attainment of His end, which is His own self-realisation. God does not find His end in His creatures, His love does not rest upon human souls with a fatherly regard which finds its joy in their very existence as His children. On the contrary, human souls are but stepping-stones upon which He plants His dreadful feet while rising to a throne apart, whereon He designs to enjoy Himself as His own object in eternal bliss.

There are many adherents of transcendental idealism who will decline to accept this description of their philosophy. In several ways they

will seek to avoid the conclusion to which their principles lead. Yet it is hard to see how that conclusion can be avoided. If human life and history in all their parts form, together with nature, one universal evolution which in every detail exhibits necessity and only when taken as a whole is discovered to be spiritual, then the individual man becomes a mere stage in a process. From the physical point of view the man is a stage in a natural process. From the point of view of the whole, of the spirit, he is a stage in an intellectual process. He is but a wave on the ocean of universal being. In himself he has no self-consciousness or freedom. At his best he is simply a vehicle for the self-consciousness and freedom of God; and that in but a momentary fashion, for very soon that immanent life will create for itself more adequate means of expression, and the man will be "cast as rubbish to the void" long ages before "God hath made the pile complete".

It is hard then to see what real spiritual satisfaction is to be derived from this doctrine. To those who rejoice in thinking for thinking sake, it gives the pleasure of an immense grasp of thought; and to superior people it gives the

additional joy of knowing that in attaining that grasp of thought they have left the stupid crowd far behind, and reached a position in which they can associate on familiar terms with the aristocracy of intellect; but neither of these satisfactions is exactly religious. The conception of Deity which emerges from this philosophy can hardly be said to stir the affections. Only through the associations which are called up from traditional religious sources by the inevitable use of certain words and phrases can the student be led into the belief that such a God would be worthy of any real regard.

But while it is necessary to criticise the current idealism in this manner, it would be a serious mistake to create the impression that the doctrine has no message for the time. On the contrary, in this very idealism, and in the frank recognition of the difficulties which beset it, will be found what is most needed at present—a justification of the supernatural. Under the influence of science, idealism took a great leap in the dark, which its own principles did not really warrant. In this way was reached the doctrine of rational continuity throughout the whole domain of fact. Yet the supernatural was not

resolved into the natural; it was only avoided. Its region was not explored and given its place in the atlas of science. It was simply omitted without explanation, for the most part without remark. It is not going too far to say that the most important problem which recent philosophy has succeeded in raising has been passed by, almost in silence, by the majority of those whose duty it was to attempt its solution, or failing that, to indicate clearly how little reliance could be placed on their theories while that solution was wanting. Briefly stated, the problem is simply this: What is the relation between the Divine Spirit and the human? To this question the man of science will simply say, I do not know, and perhaps will add, I can never know, for we are here entering the region of the unknowable.

But the idealist philosopher dare not give such answers as these. If he flatters himself that he is able to regard nature from the view-point of the all-inclusive absolute spirit, this is the problem which above all he is bound to deal with. Until he has arrived at some understanding with it he has no right to his philosophy. Until it is solved conclusively

his system carries a deep wound in its very heart.

It is hard to define religion in general, and, in order to avoid harassing disputation, it is better not to attempt to do so. To assert that religion and the supernatural are inseparable would be like begging an important question; yet experience seems to indicate that, between the two, there is a very close connexion; and it is certainly true that the only religion which most Christian people would care to preserve is a religion which is essentially supernatural. To some it may appear that the question depends very much upon the definition of the supernatural. It would be possible no doubt to give a meaning to that term which would make Spinoza a believer in supernatural religion, for it could be said that any doctrine of God in His relation to the world which enables the thinker to rise above the flux of natural causes and grasp the eternal is, in a permissible sense, supernatural. But such a definition would merely create confusion, for it would be in truth an identification of the natural with the supernatural. By supernatural religion we must mean, if we are to employ language usefully, any

doctrine which admits the possibility of interference in the regular succession of natural causes by agencies belonging to a higher, a spiritual, world.

There are two theories. One regards the universe of fact as from end to end a great unbroken series of natural causes. This is the scientific theory; or, when viewed from above so that the natural becomes translated into its spiritual equivalent, it is the philosophical. The other, while maintaining that for God there is a higher unity, holds that the regular series can be, and is at certain stages, broken in upon, interrupted, reorganised by agencies belonging to a superior spiritual world. This is the position of supernatural religion. It admits the possibility of miracle. It indicates the existence of a spiritual realm which is for us veiled in mystery.

It would be possible, of course, to show that the distinction between the two theories as thus drawn is not sufficiently definite, that much depends upon the precise signification of such terms as natural, spiritual, higher unity, interference, and so on. The objection would be quite valid if the statement just made were to be regarded as final. But it is not so. It is rather a tentative indication couched in familiar

terms for the purpose of mapping out roughly the region we propose to examine.

Further investigation will enable us to see that the supernatural element in religion corresponds precisely to that part of experience and of thought which remains the great unsolved problem for philosophy. The difficulty of philosophy will prove our opportunity. It will help us to understand, to know our own meaning, when we talk of the supernatural; and there is nothing so hard as to know one's own meaning when dealing with ultimate theological questions. This difficulty may be merely a problem awaiting solution, a problem which must be dealt with in the future, and which when solved will enable philosophy to occupy a more secure position than has ever been hers to enjoy hitherto. Or there may be something in the very nature of the case which will show that here we have discovered a fundamental difficulty, an antinomy which for human intelligence cannot be resolved, if the impatient Hegelian will for the moment admit such a possibility. In this latter case we shall be able to point out a principle which involves the possibility of the supernatural.

But the most important step remains. If this position prove tenable, we ought to be able to see more clearly the connexion between religion and theology. And surely, in the present condition of thought, this is a matter of the utmost importance. To-day, Christian theology can prove itself by an array of texts, as it has been able to do in every age since the time when it was first formulated. But something more than this is necessary if theology is to be a living thing, if it is to be what it ought to be, the most fundamental, as well as the most exalted, of all our thoughts. We need at present to be made to feel that theology is not a mere relic of the past, the putrescent remains of a dead philosophy. We need to be able to recognise in it the intellectual backbone of our religious life, to find in it the summing up of all our best thoughts concerning God and the higher parts of human experience.

LECTURE II.

THE SUPERNATURAL IN KNOWLEDGE.

In Him we live, and move, and have our being (Acts xvii. 28).

In the last lecture the relation between naturalism and the current idealism was indicated in a tentative way. It was pointed out that these two philosophies are in truth identical, the latter is simply the former regarded from a higher point of view. It is necessary that the inner principle of this truth should be made more apparent.

Naturalism is science philosophised. Science, in its pursuit of the causal connexions of facts, seems to be gradually enclosing the universe within a net-work of necessity. A vast generalisation seems to be almost within reach. In the enthusiasm created by the splendid success with which large spaces have been enclosed it has been forgotten that there are other large spaces which have not been enclosed and which seem inaccessible. Universal evolution, a prin-

ciple running throughout the whole from nebula to civilisation and making of all one perfectly articulated and rational system, advancing by differentiation and integration, is proclaimed as the ultimate law of the cosmos.

Idealism proceeds in a wholly different manner. Taking experience as it stands, the philosopher seeks the conditions of its possibility. Examination of all the ordinary modes of explaining experience reveals contradiction everywhere. Criticise substance and accident, primary and secondary qualities, space and time, cause and effect, and all will be found self-destructive. From the critical point of view even the most certain of scientific conceptions and explanations are found to be honeycombed with contradiction. The first step in the way of philosophy seems then to lead to universal scepticism. Philosophy seems to have destroyed itself. Deliverance from this consequence is effected when it is discovered that, while dealing with all these ordinary and scientific conceptions, we have been wandering in the mazes of relativity, and that a further question must be asked. How is relativity possible? Is there any principle which can account for relativity? The answer must be

affirmative. That principle is *thought*. Thought makes relation possible. Thought is the unifying principle which underlies all the diversity of experience.

But, however certain this principle may appear to be, it cannot be regarded as a satisfactory philosophy until it has proved itself adequate to the explanation of the whole system of things. That system must be shown to be the self-evolution of spirit, and in the light of this principle must be seen to be self-explanatory from end to end. Here we have the problem of the Hegelian philosophy. Without entering upon so vast an undertaking as the criticism of that philosophy as a whole, it is possible to exhibit its inner principle in a manner sufficient for the purpose which we have now in view.

Thought is essentially a principle of unity underlying difference. It grasps the relative and the opposite. In apprehending an opposition, it contains already implicitly the principle by which that opposition is to be overcome. It is thus essentially a principle which creates a rationally articulated and progressive system. As a unity which works itself out consistently even through the most extreme diversity, it

must yield an ordered rational whole. As a principle which makes every fresh integration a basis for a new differentiation with a view to a further step in its upward progress of unification, it is essentially a principle of evolution.

Thus what science is able to put forth as only a kind of untrustworthy empirical law, idealism deduces from the very nature of thought. Dialectic proves, in the manner just now indicated, that thought is the essence of things, and that being granted the identity of the real with the rational follows as a necessary consequence. The whole realm of being takes the character of a rationally ordered system, when viewed from the standpoint of the elements. When viewed from the standpoint of the whole, it becomes self-evolving, all-inclusive spirit. Thus the negation of the supernatural, suggested by the conclusions of science, seems to receive a rigorous demonstration from philosophy.

But how is this great thought principle proved? Simply by an appeal to the experience of the individual thinker. Every man who considers the questions raised by the critical examination of his own perceptions and ordinary modes of

conception, must find in himself as a thinking subject the principle which overcomes and reconciles all the oppositions which can be detected within his own experience. Relativity is possible because it exists for a self-conscious subject. The ego, or self, is the combining principle of all the heterogeneous and opposing elements of experience. Apart from it, these elements would fall asunder to their own destruction. They exist only as they exist in combination under the influence of the self-consciousness of the subject that knows them.

It is needless to spend time elaborating the proof of this position. How it has been reached has already been indicated,[1] and the literature which deals with it is sufficient in quantity and familiar to all students. But what has not been sufficiently considered is that this self is, for each person, his own individual personality. Self-consciousness, the combining principle which makes experience, is, in spite of the misleading language which is unavoidably used concerning it, never an abstract principle or law of construction, but always a concrete person. Its supreme and creative position therefore, instead of estab-

[1] See Introduction, p. 2 and ff.

lishing the objectivity of knowledge, seems to establish its subjectivity. It is very easy to say, with a brilliant professor of this university, that, "Hegel cut loose" the *a priori* element in human experience "from its subjective fastenings, and the universe, 'self-balanced, on its centre hung'".[1] Hegel certainly assumed the right to perform this feat, but the question is, did he prove that he was entitled so to do? Most of his readers find it hard to be satisfied with his treatment of this crucial question. In some places he speaks of the ego as if he regarded it as an abstraction, and some of his more recent disciples have taken to talking glibly of the "abstract ego"; but the "abstract ego" is, in this connexion, a fiction of philosophers, and exists nowhere but in their extremely abstract discussions. In any instance of knowledge, the knowing ego is surely the most concrete thing present. Or, to put it more accurately, it is the concretion of all that is present, for it is the unifying principle of all that is present, and it is that principle or form, not in abstraction from its content, but as filled with that content. And the accuracy of this view is guaranteed

[1] Maguire, *Lectures on Philosophy*, p. 188.

by the fact that abstraction is the work of the ego. The abstract exists where the ego has been at work, therefore the ego is not itself abstract.

This, it will be said, is to commit us to belief in the "transcendental ego" as a mysterious entity, a "monad without windows"; a fetish which can be relied on to kindle the devotion of the metaphysically-minded orthodox, but which the critical intelligence cannot acknowledge. But, let it be remembered, whatever be the nature of the ego, the critical intelligence can never get it, in its full living reality, on to the dissecting table in order to examine its constitution; for the critical intelligence is itself the very thing which it seeks to know. Self is always more than what it knows, for it is, in the act of knowing, the thing which knows. It is impossible for knowledge to get *in front* of self and secure its photograph, for self is itself the photographer.

But is not this to make the intelligence to be itself unintelligible, the "begriff" to be "unbegrieflich," and does not such a doctrine destroy the possibility of knowledge? This argument derives its whole plausibility from a confusion of

the abstract with the concrete. The abstract ideas or conceptions by means of which the self builds up the edifice of knowledge are of course intelligible through and through. But the word "intelligence" also means the living concrete ego, which truly can think itself, but which is also, in the very act of thinking itself, more than what it thinks itself to be.

But this does not make it to be a mysterious "monad without windows". That favourite expression is an admirable instance of the "question-begging appellative". Material metaphors, though inevitable, are dangerous things in metaphysical discussion, and have to answer for much confusion of thought. The self is not to be conceived as a kind of hard impenetrable core in the centre of experience. It is rather, if we consider it at any moment, the concretion of all that experience contains at that moment. Experience may be thought of as a self-evolving sphere, a sphere growing out of its centre. The self is not then to be compared to an indivisible atom at the centre, nor again to the mere surface regarded as a containing envelope in abstraction from the content. Rather, it is the whole as a living, growing self-evolution.

When a thing is thought, it is given its place in the whole system and that place is given to it by the relations in which it is made to stand to all the other elements of the content. But the self is neither the outer envelope abstractly, nor the total content merely, but the content in its relation to the new element held together by the envelope, and all as one living, growing being. The whole, thus regarded, and not any central atom or other element of the content, is the true unifying principle of the system.

It must be confessed, however, that illustrations of this kind are always misleading. In this case especially so, because the thing which it is sought to depict is by its very nature above description. It is above description just because it is presupposed in all description. It is itself the describing principle, which must be assumed to exist before description becomes possible. To use a much-abused word, it is, in short, transcendental.

The eminent professor, already quoted, expresses with his usual brevity and force, another means of escape from the difficulty we have been considering when, following Mr. Bradley, he urges[1] that "in metaphysics, subjective in-

[1] Maguire, *Lectures on Philosophy*, p. 202.

volves a truism or an absurdity. If every cognition be altogether subjective, we could never know it to be subjective, as *subjective* has no meaning unless contrasted with *objective*. Volumes," he adds, "could not add a tittle to this, and there I leave it." But surely this is no answer to the question we are now discussing; for it is the very essence of self-consciousness that the opposition between the subjective and objective takes place within the bounds of the subject. The subject is only recognised as subject by contrast with the object, but its very nature as subject, and not as object, consists in the fact that while contrasting itself with its opposite, it at the same time underlies and overleaps the opposition and forms the basis and also the over-arching firmament of the contrast. It is the "crystal sphere" which holds itself and the object together. This is its self-consciousness.

How intensely the natural man distrusts reasoning of this kind, no matter how conclusive it may seem to be! He has always the lurking suspicion that there may be hidden subtleties which he cannot detect. Perhaps he shows his wisdom. Let two very plain considerations then

serve to enforce our argument and to make clear its meaning and aim.

If the Hegelian philosophy is sound, every thinking man who goes to the trouble of mastering its leading principles ought to be able to see that the whole course of human experience is a rational process. That is to say, he should be able to see that the experience of the individual forms but a part of a great whole which is, and must be, a system perfectly articulated from end to end. The spiritual principle which he possesses in himself puts the thinker into a position from which he can discern the unity of the parts in the whole. In consequence no part can be, in its nature, inaccessible to him. He may find the multitude of details inexhaustible, and in that way find even ordinary nature unknowable, but no part can be cut off from him by any impassable barrier, for in his reason—that is, in the unifying capacity of his own intelligence—he has the key which is fitted to unlock every door. Now, let us ask, is this true? Here the theory can be brought to the test of fact. The answer surely must be that it is not true. It *may* be true (though much might be said to the contrary),

in the case of material things, that the only obstacle to perfect knowledge is the infinity of detail; but it is not true in the case of minds. Mind is separated from mind by a barrier which is, not figuratively, but literally impassable. It is impossible for any ego to leap this barrier and enter into the experiences of any other ego.

The experience of the individual has been compared to a circular panorama of moving pictures. To adopt the language of the ingenious author of this illustration: "Each one of us is shut up alone inside such a panorama, which is movable and flexible, and follows him wherever he goes. The things and persons depicted in it move and act upon one another; but all this is in the panorama, and not beyond it. The individual cannot get outside this encircling scenery, and no one else can get inside it. Apart from it, prior to it, we have no self; it is indeed the stuff of which oneself is made." "Every one of us has painted for himself the picture within which he is shut up, and he is perpetually painting and re-painting it, not by copying from some original, but by arranging and completing confused images and tints that are always appearing magically on

his canvas. Now this magical panorama, from which the individual cannot escape, and the laws of which are the laws of his experience, is simply his own mind regarded as a content or a world. His own body and mind, regarded as things, are within the panorama, just as other people's bodies and minds are. The whole world, for each of us, *is* our course of consciousness, in so far as this is regarded as a system of objects which we are obliged to think."[1]

This interesting illustration presents in a very striking manner the precise point with which we have been attempting to deal. Every one has his own panorama within which he is shut up and into which no other person can enter. This is the truth which gives to subjective idealism its impregnable position. No one believes in subjective idealism, but every competent critic who has examined it has confessed that the arguments for it are unanswerable.[2] As Hume

[1] Bosanquet, *Essentials of Logic*, p. 14.

[2] Mr. Bradley seems to deny this, but implicitly he admits it. See *Appearance and Reality*, chap. xxi.

It is sometimes thought to be a sufficient refutation of solipsism to point out that the Ego comes to a knowledge of itself only by being brought into connexion with other selves, that personality comes to light only through social relationship.

This argument is simply a confusion of the order of

said, these arguments "admit of no answer and produce no conviction". These words are often quoted as if they formed a perfect refutation of solipsism, but their real meaning is that when idealism becomes consistent it becomes incredible, an impressive fact which modern idealists who profess the objective doctrine may well be asked to ponder. But can they ever get out of the difficulty while they cling to their true principles? It can scarcely be considered too daring to utter an emphatic negative. Just as materialism fails to explain sensation and thought, and must ever so fail, so idealism fails to explain the multitude of persons, and must ever so fail. For person, or spirit, is the highest category of idealism. Person, or spirit, is the ultimate unit under which thought must subsume all multiplicity in order to reduce it to system.

This whole argument is but another way of putting the thought which was expressed more generally above, that self-consciousness is not abstract, but concrete. For idealism, self-consciousness is the explaining principle. But self-consciousness operates only as the activity

becoming with the order of being, the order of scientific with the order of philosophic explanation.

of a concrete person. If idealism then is to be a philosophy it must be able to exhibit all things as a single experience. That is, if the whole universe is, by means of self-consciousness, to be reduced to one system, it must become the experience of a single person. Personality must be denied to all beings but one. A conclusion which must be pronounced absurd.[1]

The second plain consideration which will help us to grasp the situation is the extremely personal, we might almost say subjective, character which belongs to all philosophies. Of all kinds of systematic thinking, philosophy, if sound, should be the most objective. It should rise more than any other above the points of view which individual thinkers may happen to occupy. Scientific thought is plainly objective, independent of individual peculiarities. And the more thoroughly scientific thought is, the more objective it will be found to be. And why? Because science deals with abstractions, with thoughts which omit personal peculiarities. By a venture of faith we assume that the abstract laws according to which we construct the objects

[1] See Mr. Balfour's chapter on "Idealism" in his *Foundations of Belief*.

depicted in our panoramas (to recur to the illustration already used) are identical for all, or at least correspond, and this one great assumption gives objectivity to all our systematic thinking about nature, and finds its perpetual justification in experience. But when we try to rise higher and to comprehend all panoramas complete in one universal system, we find ourselves baffled. If the rise were justifiable it would provide the most objective point of view which it is possible to imagine, that is, it would yield a theory of things which would be as free as possible from all personal and local colouring, not because abstracted from these, as with scientific thought, but because lifted above them to a position from which all personal and local points of view would be seen to be lost in their relation to the whole.

Yet what is the fact? The study of philosophy is the study of a multitude of personal and subjective points of view. So far does this go, that the student rarely finds himself compelled to ask: Is this true? but almost always: What is the view of Spinoza or Kant or Hegel or some other master? The words of one of the most distinguished of recent Hegelians give unintentional testimony to the truth of this

assertion. "Each philosophy," acknowledges the late Professor Wallace, "is from one point of view a strictly individualist performance. It is not in one way *the* absolute truth, which it promises or hopes to disclose. The truth is seen through one being's eyes, and his 'measure,' as Protagoras might have said, is upon it."[1] How utterly true this is the experienced student of philosophical systems will readily confess. But what is the meaning of his confession? Is it not that the effort to rise above the personal standpoint to the standpoint of the concrete universal, the attempt, that is, to cross the barrier which is set between soul and soul, and present to mankind an objective, and yet not abstract, view of things, is impossible?

But this, it may be said, is to justify scepticism, to preach mere negation. On the contrary, it is simply an effort to discover the limits to which the principles of idealism can carry us. We have been basing our discussion all through upon idealist principles, and we are now led to the conclusion that those principles lead us to the ego, to the principle of personality, and no farther. Just as materialism is valid

[1] Wallace, *Prolegomena to Hegel's Logic*, p. 171.

enough as long as we confine our attention to physical science, but fails us when we rise to the consideration of thought and will; so idealism is valid for the latter, but fails when applied to a universe which consists of a multitude of persons. It is idle to argue with Hegel that to set a limit to thought is impossible because to be conscious of a limit is to have already passed it. For the peculiarity of this limit is that it does not and cannot enter consciousness. If we could think another's self as a self, if, that is, we could enter his panorama, then the limit would be passed. But this we cannot do. When a limit has occurred as a limit in consciousness, thought has passed it; but this limit has not so occurred. It is inferred to exist from certain peculiarities in the way in which some of the pictures in the panorama present themselves, but if idealist principles are rigorously applied it cannot be proved to exist at all, so little ground is there for supposing that feeling or thought can grasp it as a limit.[1]

There is much in recent and contemporary philosophical literature which goes to show the soundness of our conclusion that idealism has

[1] See lecture vi. for a fuller discussion of this question.

done its work when the principle of personality is reached. Writers who use this principle as a solvent for psychological philosophies are always convincing as long as they are critical, but when they become constructive and try to make their principle a world-formula they fail conspicuously. So it was with the late Professor T. H. Green. Some, following their master Hegel, use the principle of personality in an impersonal manner, and so seem to avoid the great difficulty. But the difficulty is not really avoided. The result is that the human individual loses all true personality and becomes a kind of psychological ganglion in the system of the absolute.[1] It is curious that these philo-

[1] According to Mr. F. H. Bradley (*Appearance and Reality*, chap. x.) the self is *appearance*, not *reality*. But how can this be, seeing that the whole distinction between appearance and reality is unmeaning except as it exists for the self?

In dealing with the question of solipsism, Mr. Bradley urges that our own past self is just as inaccessible as the self of another person. But surely, in spite of the psychological intricacy of Mr. Bradley's proof, it is clear that past and present have no meaning except for the self. To talk of the past self as distinct from the present self, however useful in psychology, is inadmissible in philosophy. Has Kant lived in vain? Past and present experiences are past and present because they exist for the one self whose

sophers do not see that very knife which they use to dissect the old psychologists can be applied just as readily to themselves. It is also curious to observe how nimbly they turn and twist, how they lose themselves in mazes of psychology in the effort to escape the pursuit of the individual ego, and how vainly. As the madman cannot escape his shadow, no matter how swiftly he may run or how abruptly he may double, so neither can the idealist philosopher escape the individual ego. It is best for him to accept things as they are and recognise in this singular fact the presence of the extreme limit to which his principles can carry him.

But it would surely be a hasty inference that philosophy must needs be exhausted because idealism has done its work and delivered its message to mankind. Philosophy seeks for the meaning of all that must be accepted as human experience. It takes human experience, sets it out in all its main elements, and then endeavours to form a plan of systematic thought which will account for the whole. It has one fundamental postulate, that there is a meaning,

identity underlies them and makes them and the whole time-series possible. See *Appearance and Reality*, chap. xxi.

or in other words, that there is an all-pervading unity. But, it will be said, this is a return to idealism. Not necessarily. The motto of idealism is "all or none". It is not satisfied with an imperfect knowledge of the greatest things. It must rise to the Divine standpoint and comprehend the concrete universal. But it is surely absurd to suppose that philosophy can adopt no humbler attitude. Why should it be impossible to know lesser things well and greater things in terms of lesser things which may serve to represent them? Why should not we be satisfied with a working approximation to the knowledge of Divine things in terms of human things? As a matter of fact this is the very position into which we are inevitably driven.

Human experience consists of three great elements — personal experience, nature, and the multitude of persons.

The possibility of the first yields belief in the ego, in man as spirit. It is because we have experience, that we believe in ourselves as spirits. I have experience, therefore *I* am. All we know of spirit is summed up, defined, in the having of experience. This is what spirit means for us. Doubtless spirit means more

than this for God. But, for us, to be a spirit is to be the subject of an experience.

We must accept, however, as data, not only personal experience, the panorama of the individual, but also nature, a vast collocation of things in space and time. And nature must be assumed to exist and persist independently of the individual observer. The snow-peak glitters in the sunshine, the billows roar upon the beach, the rose glows with colour and gives forth its perfume, though there be no human being present to see and hear and enjoy. It is matter for wonder if any intelligent readers of Locke's essay really believe in his explanation of the distinction between the primary and secondary qualities. Does any one believe that, apart from an observer possessed of eyes and ears, the world is a collection of colourless, soundless bodies extended in space? If he does, let him go further and ask how the primary qualities come about, and he will find that it takes a thinking mind, as well as eyes and ears, to make nature. In fact, nature is a vast experience, an experience which was taking place when the earth was a nebulous mass of gaseous matter "ruining along the illimitable inane," when primeval monsters

"tore each other in the slime," as well as in more recent times when the earth came to be filled with intelligent creatures possessed of eyes and ears.

Now this vast experience which we call nature demands a thinking subject, a personal being, to make it possible. If the sun shone and the earth bloomed ages before man existed, it is because God, the universal personality, had experience in those ages. If, even now, things are when we do not see and hear them, it is because God has present experience of them all. Our instinctive, ineradicable belief in nature as distinguished from our own experience is, when understood, discovered to be belief in God as a thinking, personal being; or, to use the language of popular religion, it is belief in God as a living God. When we discern the existence of nature as a great objective system, we are, without realising it, entering into the mind of God. God is then Spirit, Person, because nature is.

But here we have taken the very step which we have seen that the principles of idealism do not warrant. We have passed from one panorama to another. We have based our reasoning

on the ground that all experience must be traced back to our own ego as to its underlying and explanatory principle, and then, in order to justify our common-sense belief in nature as a system of things apart from us, we have assumed the existence of another, a universal, ego.

It may perhaps assist to the understanding of this difficulty, to abandon the more general statement of it, and give a particular illustration. In the scheme of idealism space and time do not exist apart from the knowing subject, they are aspects of the subject's work. They are ways in which the mind apprehends things, not existences which have their being apart from the mind and its perception and knowledge. As Kant showed, it is only on this view that the experience which we have by means of our sensibility can be explained.

But, in assuming the existence of nature independently of us, we are giving to space and time an independence which experience does not warrant. True, we are not making them independent of all spirit, because we assume the existence of God, the universal Spirit, to make them possible. Nevertheless we are passing beyond what is justified by our own experience, and our own

experience is all that, in strictness, we have to go upon.

Now this is the very point upon which it is most necessary to lay stress. We must pass beyond the standpoint of individual experience. We must assume the existence of other spirits. We must believe in God as the self-conscious subject who makes nature possible, and we must believe in other experiences and other minds besides our own.

But we do all this in spite of idealism. Idealism does not warrant these beliefs. A strict application of its principles would lead to solipsism, the doctrine that I, the thinking self-conscious subject, am the universe. But, though such a doctrine is impossible, we cannot renounce idealism. Its principles are, so far as they go, incontrovertible. We must rise to a position higher than idealism. We must adopt all that idealism has taught us, and strive to attain a doctrine which will include that teaching and at the same time explain the aspects of truth which it cannot explain.

Idealism explains in the main the experience of the individual thinker from his individual point of view. It also justifies the belief in God as

self-conscious subject or person, if once the leap from individual experience to nature be taken under the influence of common-sense. But it does not justify this leap, the breaking of the bounds of the panorama of the individual and the assuming of a great universal panorama called nature. Nor does it justify our inevitable assumption of the existence of a multitude of panoramas belonging to the multitude of human persons. Or, to recur to the more particular statement of the case, idealism does not justify our assuming the existence of a world in space and time other than that world which receives these forms from our own individual apprehension.

Now it is this very defect in the idealist argument which drives us on to a position higher than idealism. We can now see that the definition of the Divine nature which we have just attained is not sufficient. If God were merely personal, if, that is, God were *a person*, we should be compelled to assume the existence of some ultimate unity higher than He, in order to justify our belief in the whole universe of being. Persons we have seen to be mutually exclusive. The experience of a person

is like a panorama into which none but he can enter. If God were simply *a person*, nature would become a private panorama of his, from which all other persons would be excluded. In that case, He would be no longer God. He would be one among many; and the many would remain as a fact urgently demanding some principle higher than He as the ground of its possibility. The fact is, the multitude of persons implies the existence of a principle of unity more fundamental than that of personality, a unity in which all spirits have their home and bond of union. Let it be granted at once that here we are trying to make thought do that to which it is not quite equal. We are assuming an existence which, in its fulness, we cannot think. But this unity cannot be described as unintelligible. Rather, it is intelligible and something more. It may be described as an object of faith. But if so, this is not a faith which is to be contrasted with knowledge, for here the distinction between faith and knowledge has disappeared. Or, if that distinction be maintained, then faith has become more fundamental than knowledge; for upon this faith all knowledge depends. Consequently, the appeal

to this faith cannot be said to be the calling in of a *deus ex machina*, nor can it be described as an intellectual leap in the dark, because this is the faith which underlies all coherence speculative and practical. It is the belief that the universe is trustworthy, the faith which must be professed for regulative purposes, if for no other, that faith in ultimate unity which is necessary for thought, for life, and for sanity.

But may not this ultimate unity be conceived as a kind of fate which rules the gods? The personality of God is inferred from the fact that nature demands a spiritual interpretation. But here is a mysterious unity which apparently lies away behind the Divine. The answer to this objection is not so difficult as might be expected. It is true that nature is a great experience, and therefore demands a spiritual explanation. But nature is more than a great experience. It is also the whole which integrates all particular experiences. The Divine subject, if the expression is permissible, is therefore very different from the human. The Divine subject *includes* all other subjects. The human *excludes*. The panorama of the man shuts out every other man's panorama. But all human panoramas

take their place in the Divine. The ultimate unity then belongs to God. He is personal, but He is also more than personal. He is Spirit, and yet in Him all spirits find their home and bond of union.

The failure of idealism to fulfil its promise and yield a complete philosophy lands us then in a conception which is identical with the central thought of Christian theology. The innermost truth of things, in other words, God, must be conceived as personal; but the ultimate unity, which is His, must be believed to be super-personal. It is a unity of persons, not a personal unity. For us personality is the ultimate form of unity. It is not so for Him. For in Him all persons live and move and have their being.

The way by which we have arrived at our conclusion suggests an interesting thought regarding the relation between Christian theism and philosophical systems. Materialism, when its defect is discovered and understood, points on to idealism. Idealism, when its defect is disclosed, points to Christian theism. Materialism accounts for what may be called the things of experience considered abstractly. Idealism

accounts for experience regarded as a system, but is unable to advance beyond personality. Christian theism alone is able to step out beyond idealism and include the multitude of persons, and it does this by means of its great characteristic doctrine of the Trinity, the essence of which is that God is personal and also super-personal, that in Him there is a transcendent unity which can embrace a personal multiplicity. This is an act, rather of faith than of knowledge; but it is a faith which is justified by speculative necessity as well as by practical considerations. And the principle which it yields is, we shall see, the characteristic principle of the supernatural.

When thus regarded, the Christian conception of Deity is seen to stand midway between Deism and Agnosticism. Deism in all its forms makes the universe absurdly simple. Against it Agnosticism was an inevitable reaction, a protest of common-sense against a narrow one-eyed dogmatism. But the protest went the way of protests. It ran to the opposite extreme. It became the adoration of the unintelligible, the deification of the unmeaning. Christian theology includes the truth and excludes the error of both these

doctrines. For it God is personal, He is a living God. He knows, He loves, He wills. But He is more, He is the ultimate mystery. That mystery is, however, no mere blank unknowable. One affirmation can be made concerning it. One shaft of light, the brightest human vision can discern, penetrates the gloom. God is one. If the conception of personality is not adequate as a final description of Deity, then we must believe in God as ultimately superpersonal unity.

And this is all we require for religion. For as the personality of God makes it possible for us to trust Him, to love Him, to pray to Him; so His final superpersonal unity makes us find in Him the principle which must at last solve all the doubts and explain all the contradictions of life. If the man who said, "Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him," could be described as a Deist, then his religion was better than his theology. The mysteries of pain and of evil, the rebellion of the spirit against the tyranny of the material world, these disintegrating forces which rend in pieces the petty systems of Deism, cannot destroy Christianity; for it contains a principle by which

all the oppositions in which these forces have their origin must be overcome and reconciled.

And here, above all, we have that which secures to man the full enjoyment of his spiritual patrimony. Man possesses as his own the powers which belong to him as a free intelligent agent, he lives and moves and has his being as a person, just because God is more than personal.

LECTURE III.

THE SUPERNATURAL IN WILL.

Shall we not be in subjection unto the Father of Spirits and live (Hebrews xii. 9).

THE variations of philosophical and religious thought on the subject of free-will would provide material for one of the most curious chapters in a history of human speculation. On no other subject have opinions been so contradictory, and the statements of leading thinkers so uncompromisingly dogmatic. It is amusing to find that some of the acutest philosophers of to-day are almost as ready to lose their tempers in their impatient disgust at the perversity of their opponents, as were the Calvinist and Arminian disputants of former times. "This doctrine," says one of the ablest of living Idealists, speaking of free-will, "may in philosophy be considered obsolete, though it will continue to flourish in popular ethics. As soon as its meaning is apprehended, it loses all plausibility.

But the popular moralist will always exist by not knowing what he means."[1] Yet these are the words of one of the most noted representatives of that philosophy which gave a new life and a new meaning to the doctine of freedom.

The success and the failure of modern idealism are nowhere so conspicuous as in its treatment of the problem which is now before us. At first, when leading principles are mastered, the student rejoices in what seems a perfect solution of all difficulties. He has attained a new point of view. The old perplexities have vanished. Freedom and necessity are no longer opposed. They have become, not merely consistent, but interdependent and mutually explanatory. One cannot be understood, cannot exist, without the other. Spirit is free just because all facts are necessitated. Necessity prevails throughout nature and experience, just because Spirit is free. We have simply two ways of looking at the same thing. The lower way is called necessity, the higher way is called freedom. The lower way takes experience piecemeal, the higher grasps it whole. The former finds that every element is determined by the relations in which it stands

[1] Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, p. 393.

to all other elements. Everything in experience, that is, is determined from without, determined by the not-self; and determination by the not-self is the very essence of necessity. The latter finds that the whole, since it is all-inclusive, cannot be determined from without by the not-self, and must therefore be self-determined; and self-determination is essentially freedom.

When the idea of self-determination is attained, the whole discussion enters on a new phase. The controversy between the Determinist and the Indeterminist becomes, or seems to become, futile; the motive ceases to be a bogy with which to scare timid moralities; all the old difficulties seem to vanish. Certainly no more promising idea ever dawned upon the philosophic mind. But the promise of its dawn is not fulfilled. Mature deliberation seems to show that the freedom which is the counterpart of necessity has nothing to do with human volition. It is the possession of the all-inclusive Spirit. He is free, simply because He is all-inclusive. From His point of view, there is no not-self whose opposition He does not overcome and reconcile. He is not then determined from without. He is self-determined, free. Man is in a very different

position. He cannot pretend to be all-inclusive. He is a part of the universal system, and is therefore under the sway of necessity. He is bound, just because he is man. To call him free in this sense, is to call him God, to claim for him a position of supremacy, which is altogether contrary to the teaching of experience. Thus the hope created by the new conception dies, and the old problem has to be faced again, and all the old difficulties reassert themselves.

But the fact is, this failure is the consequence of the imperfect grasp of the current idealism. In the rush to attain complete and ultimate unity one side of the truth has been forgotten. In consequence the whole moral value of the most illuminating idea which idealist thought has yielded has been lost, the most important and fruitful conception which ethical philosophy has reached in modern times has been rendered worthless.

Stated in vague and general terms the idealist theory of freedom seems very satisfactory. Difficulty arises when the effort is made to apply it to the will of the individual. How is the self-determination of the individual consistent with the exercise of a similar power on the part of

every other individual and on the part of God? In truth, as we have already seen, the theory seems applicable to God only. Man is inevitably reduced to the position which has been described as that of a psychological ganglion in the system of the Absolute. Every element in human life and experience takes its place in the universal system, becomes an element there, and is connected by links of necessity with every other element in that system. Yet how cruel and how inconsistent is this degradation of the human spirit! For the individual self in its relation to its own experience is the means by which this conception of freedom has been gained. By examination of our own inner consciousness we learn that knowledge and will are inseparably connected in the determination of our experience. Will pursues as ends the ideas which knowledge presents; and as knowledge is only another name for the activity of the self in the formation of ideas, so will is only another name for the activity of the self in the pursuit of ends. Thus the analysis of experience, on the side of knowledge, which reveals self-consciousness as the underlying principle, is supplemented by an analysis of experience, on the side of volition,

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which reveals self-determination as the underlying principle. On both sides experience is created by the activity of the self. Self-consciousness and self-determination in conjunction weave the web of experience, and both are to be regarded as aspects of the one activity. Indeed, the one conception of self-determination is sufficient to include both will and knowledge, for consciousness is a species of determination. The principle of self-determination is then the formative principle of experience. Thus we learn that freedom is the truth of necessity. Experience is a system or cosmos of relations which are necessarily connected, but the whole cosmos is determined by the freedom of the self-conscious subject.

But here experience means the experience of the individual, and the determining self is, for every consciousness, the individual thinking person who owns that consciousness. Thus we see that freedom in the sense of a self-determination, which is also the determination of a cosmos of necessary relations, is known to us only as it is presented to each one of us in the case of his own individual experience.

If then man had not presented us with spirit

as the principle by which a cosmos is freely determined, where would have been our knowledge of the Absolute and His doings? The human individual is the ladder by means of which the philosopher has been able to ascend to his exalted theory. And yet, when the theory having been reached the ladder is no longer required, it is spurned contemptuously. There is, however, a good reason for this. The theory of self-determination as applied to the Absolute is altogether plausible. But the moment the effort is made to interpret the life of the individual human being by means of it, difficulty arises; and that in two ways.

First, as already indicated, the question occurs, how are we to reconcile the freedom of man with the freedom of God? We are caught in a dilemma, a see-saw, between a freedom of God which annihilates man and a freedom of man which annihilates God. If unfettered self-determination be attributed to God, the whole cosmos of nature, including human life in its widest extent, is subdued beneath the iron rule of necessity, man loses his moral capacity and dignity, he becomes a stage in a natural process. On the other hand, if the self-determination of

man be asserted, then he becomes the creator of his own cosmos, and, to put it in the most moderate way, a limit is set to the Divine freedom; in other words, God ceases to be God. Strict consistency of thought would, however, drive us farther and force us to identify human experience with nature, and so put man in the place of God. We are driven, that is, to solipsism based on an analysis of the conditions of will.

The situation is exactly similar to that in which we found ourselves placed in our discussion of the conditions of knowledge. Idealism has led us to personality and personality has involved us in an antinomy from which there is no escape as long as the principles of idealism are adhered to. Once again, we must attempt to rise above idealism and gain a more comprehensive view of things. We must endeavour to form a scheme which will grasp both sides of truth in their completeness. And this is possible in one way only, the way which we had to follow in the parallel case of knowledge.

The whole position may be briefly exhibited as follows. The necessity of nature implies the freedom of God. He must therefore be regarded

as personal. He is an agent who wills. He acts with a view to ends. But this is not a complete definition of His nature. If it were, God would be but one among many. Just as man creates his experience by the exercise of his self-determining activity, so, on this supposition, God would have to be regarded as another Person who creates His vastly greater experience—that experience which we call nature—by the exertion of a similar power. And nature would stand to every human experience in the same way in which the experience of one man stands to that of another. The great Divine panorama and all the little human ones would be mutually exclusive. But this is absurd. God does create the vast experience called nature. But He also includes within the circuit of His being all persons and all experiences, the whole universe. While, therefore, He is personal, there is also in Him a unity which transcends personality, by which He is able to be the reconciling principle and home of the multitude of self-determining agents. Thought cannot rise to a standpoint exalted enough to make the inmost nature of this ultimate unity manifest, but the faith that such unity exists is the only way of salvation

for morality. Apart from this faith, the basis of man's moral life will be found to be utterly untrustworthy, the shifting sand of inevitable contradiction.

It is well that we should try to realise the greatness of the salvation which is brought to man as a moral being by this doctrine of God as personal, and at the same time as ultimately superpersonal unity. It restores man to the full possession of himself, but does not destroy his dependence upon God. The difficulty about free-will has always been that it renders impossible a complete view of things, it tears philosophical systems to shreds. And so philosophers, whether theological or otherwise, people who must have consistent schemes of thought, Calvinists, Materialists, Naturalists, Idealists, will always in the end turn and revile free-will. Moreover, they are never satisfied with denial and disproof. They always get angry. There is something irritating in the obstinate persistency with which this doctrine asserts itself against every possible system which the mind of man can frame. It is a foe to all the philosophies; and it is a foe that, overthrown a hundred times, rises as vigorous and as light-hearted as ever for the next encounter.

The truth is, free-will is based on man's consciousness of his moral nature. It represents, not any speculative theory, but one of the great facts which every theory of things must explain or perish. It is our ordinary way of expressing the volitional side of man's self-hood. And just as, on the side of knowledge, the effort to harmonise the human self with the Divine, forces us to appeal to a principle of reconciliation which must for us remain transcendent, so, on the volitional side, the effort to give the human will its place in a universal system discloses an opposition which no effort of thought can overcome. We have to choose between philosophy and human nature, between theory and fact; and in that choice theory must go to the wall. Philosophy was made for man, not man for philosophy. If man is to retain the full endowment of his moral nature, we must make up our minds to accept for ourselves an incomplete theory of things. But since the demand for ultimate unity is imperative, we must assume a transcendent principle which, not for us, but for God, reconciles all oppositions and creates universal harmony. It is this final thought which means for man, in the last resort, utter dependence upon

God. The dual conception involved in the Christian doctrine gives then moral salvation to man, because it gives full play to man's nature as a free personal agency, it delivers him from that monstrous sacrifice to theory which every philosophical system demands; but it does not deify him. It allows him to possess himself, but it does not assure him he possesses the universe. Above and beneath and around all, underlying and overarching and including the whole world of being and the whole multitude of spiritual agents, overcoming all oppositions, harmonising all discords, is the transcendent unity of the Godhead, the supreme object of faith, the ultimate ground of confidence.

The second difficulty in which we are involved when we attempt to apply the principle of self-determination to man concerns the relations in which he stands to his physical and psychological environment. Here we find ourselves on ground which has been made familiar by the arguments of the Determinists. The decisions of the will, we have been told, depend on character and circumstances combined. Again, character depends ultimately on facts over which the agent has no control. Heredity and en-

vironment account for its beginnings. The circumstances of the man's life account for its development. The decisions of the will must then be regarded as the inevitable outcome of the man's natural constitution and surroundings. Man is therefore necessitated. To this line of argument the principles of idealism supply a very thorough-going answer. Man makes his own experience. The self is the formative principle of the whole world of its consciousness. Will is always conscious. Action which is not conscious is not voluntary. No circumstance therefore can affect the will except through the medium of consciousness. If physical or subconscious factors have to be considered, then it will be found that their influence is exerted in the way of introducing certain elements into consciousness. But these elements enter consciousness only as they are determined by consciousness. Again, influences which act subconsciously in the creation of such elements are, for the most part at all events, the results of former acts of volition. They are the creatures of habit, and habit arises in the first instance from voluntary action. In the main, character consists of habits. It is therefore the child of

will. It is self-created. Thus both circumstances and character affect the will only as they have been determined by the self. In volition everything has to be ultimately referred to self-determination. In other words, the will is free.

There can be no doubt that this argument is unanswerable. Whatever depends upon consciousness depends upon the self ultimately. The self is the presupposition of consciousness. There is no getting behind it. When it is shown that will to be will must be conscious, the battle against determinism has been won. In strictness, it is unnecessary to go a single step farther.

At the same time every one feels that this answer, 'conclusive though it be, is' not quite satisfactory. It may be unanswerable, but it does not succeed in producing perfect conviction. The reason is that it seems to place the will in a position which is too commanding. In practical matters we are all aware of our freedom. But we are also aware that the freedom which we possess and enjoy is subject to many very great limitations. We find ourselves, to a very large extent, at the mercy of circumstances. We feel the restrictions imposed by our own past deci-

sions, by the wills of other men, by the social conditions in which we live. We also know that the range of our ability to interfere in nature is exceedingly small. We are frequently oppressed by the sense of our littleness and powerlessness. If then determinism degrades us too much, this doctrine of freedom exalts us too much. We feel that the claim made for the self is too good and great to be true. It is therefore necessary to consider the limitations of the will.

If man were perfectly free, *i.e.*, self-determined, the experience of the individual would form a perfectly articulated system. That system would be rational from end to end. Its necessity would be complete. Every element would grow out of every other element in a perfectly accountable manner. The whole would form an unbroken net-work which reason would weave according to its own rules. Experience would be a complete cosmos.

As a matter of fact, however, no individual's experience does form a complete cosmos. Reason is certainly at work, and weaves its web according to its own laws, but it never weaves a perfect pattern. There are broken threads, ragged ends, strange breaks in the pattern, and unaccountable

elements everywhere. *Side by side with the necessary or rational we must, in fact, recognise the contingent.* And this contingent part of experience is very great. We seem to detect it, for example, in the way in which natural objects are collocated. Above all, it can be discerned in our social relations. Wherever one individual is at the mercy of another, the contingent will be found.

Under two heads especially we may group the most noteworthy instances of its occurrence: heredity and solidarity. The former includes all cases in which the past history of the human race is credited with the formation of personal characteristics in the present. It is, however, but a sub-species of the latter.

The solidarity of the human race is one of the great ideas of the day. It emphasises in an important way the truth that the life of the individual is inseparably bound up with the life of the community. To mention any element in thought or conduct which does not owe something to social relationship would be impossible. It may seem strange to point to so vast a tract of human experience as the field of the contingent. But as a matter of fact, from the point of view of the individual, it must be so regarded.

Why has any particular person been born into the world with certain physical characteristics? Why has he certain moral or intellectual predispositions? Why was he educated in a particular way? How did he acquire his manners, modes of thought, ways of speaking and acting? If answers could be given to these questions, it would be found that all these peculiar circumstances of the individual depend to a very large extent on the decisions of other wills; and it is surely plain enough that, *regarded simply as an element in the individual's experience*, everything which depends upon the will of another is contingent. Even if it were true, as the Determinist urges, that every act of will is a case of cause and effect, an instance of natural necessity, the fact would still remain that elements in the experience of one person which depend upon the will of another are, for the person who experiences them, not necessary, but contingent. They have not unbroken rational connexion with every other element in the experience. The motives which determine them necessarily, which are, on this theory, their natural causes, cannot enter the other experience. *They* are parts of one panorama, *their effects* are parts of another.

Now unfettered self-determination must correspond, as we have seen, to perfect necessity, to a cosmos rationally complete. *The contingent then, in experience, is the mark of some limit to self-determination.* The individual spirit determines its experience, paints its panorama, subject to great limitations. What are those limitations? The answer which we now see our way to give is that, in part at all events, they consist in the existence and agency of other spirits. Spirits form a great community. They possess solidarity. And, just because of that solidarity, every member in the community, every individual spirit, lives its life and creates its experience subject to conditions imposed by all the rest.[1]

When the meaning of this doctrine is grasped it will seem not so much a truth as a truism. That we live our conscious life, think our thoughts and make our decisions, subject to innumerable limitations imposed on us by circumstances, both natural and social, is the most obvious fact in the world. The important point is to interpret this obvious fact, to express it in terms of spirit, to view it in the light of the

[1] See p. 82, lecture ii., and *Short Study of Ethics*, pp. 50 and ff.

doctrine that experience is self-created according to the law of reason. To recur to the old illustration, experience is a panorama which each person paints for himself. But the picture is not designed capriciously. It is the expression of reason. If the painter threw upon the canvas his unconditioned self, supposing such a thing possible, then the design would form a perfect harmony. It would be perfectly rational throughout. But this he cannot do. For he works subject to conditions imposed by nature and by men. These conditions introduce elements which break the rational symmetry of the design, but which, through the reaction of the self upon them, give a wealth and variety which would be otherwise impossible. And all this wealth and variety has, from the standpoint of the individual, a character of contingency.

The existence of this vast contingent element in experience and the contrast in which it stands to the man's sense of himself as a rational self-determining agent, create that extraordinary uncertainty in human self-estimation which can be traced in all literature. At one time man thinks himself a god, exults in the consciousness of his knowledge and self-legislation, and prides him-

self upon the dignity of his self-command and self-reliance. At another time he despairs because he realises the immensity and duration of the universe and the vastness of his limitations. He thinks himself the sport of fate, the creature of circumstances, a wave on the ocean of being. But neither estimate is the true one. He is neither a god nor a creature of circumstances. He is, rather, an agent possessed of a limited freedom, a freedom, that is, which has to effect a compromise with other freedoms. He is a member of a community; and if he is to live his proper life he has to come to terms with the other members.

From the point of view which we have now attained we are able to see how it is that the individual can be a member of a community without losing his self-hood. At present, the idea of solidarity is in the ascendant. The individualism of past generations is justly censured. We are finding out our dependence upon the community in the widest sense of the term, upon the past of human history, the present of human society. There is even a danger lest we should go too far in this direction and lose sight of personality as an individual possession. It

may again become necessary to assert the rights of the individual. However that may be, we can now see how inevitable is the swing of opinion from individuality to solidarity and from solidarity to individuality. Man is a free, self-centred unit. But, in the exercise of his self-determination, he is limited by the community, by the restrictions imposed by the exercise of a power similar to his own on the part of every member of the whole multitude of personal agents. Looking within, man finds himself a person, and recognises his power and the dignity of his position. Looking without, he finds himself in a world which seems independent of him and which imposes so many limitations upon him and makes him exert his powers in so many ways already prescribed, that he almost loses the sense of his personal dignity. Or, grasping a higher thought, he recognises his community with the world in which he lives, and, in the thought of the greatness of its claims upon him, almost renounces his individuality. But a just estimate of his position should give full recognition to both truths. Man is personal. His power of self-determination is his birthright. But, at the same time, he exercises this power under a host of

limitations imposed by nature and society. And it is the joint action of the two elements which makes him to be what he is: a free person and yet a member of a great community with which his life is inseparably united.

For the sake of clearness, it may be well to consider these limitations a little more particularly. But, before doing so, it is necessary to guard against misunderstanding by recalling the doctrine set forth in the earlier part of this lecture. Let it be remembered that self-determination is world-determination. The Ego makes, by the joint operation of knowledge and will, the world of its own experience. But, in acting as creator, the Ego is not free to invent capriciously the system or contents of its cosmos. Certain laws must rule that system and certain great collocations of the objects we call natural must be included in the contents. By no possibility can these laws be other than they are. Nor can the great elemental arrangements of natural things be altered to suit the caprice or the reason (as it may seem) of the moment. It will be found that some of the limitations which thus come to light do not affect the freedom of the will in the true sense of the term. It will also be seen that some are, from the ordin-

ary point of view, limitations of the power to do rather than limitations of the power to will, restrictions of action rather than of volition. The latter result is of importance because it shows that our doctrine enables us to rise to a position in which the distinction between volition and "outward action" ceases to create difficulty.

A mere inspection of the phenomena of will leads to the following classification.[1]

Will seems to be limited by the laws of nature. Man overcomes these laws by obeying them. They appear, therefore, to form a vast system of restrictions shutting in human activity on every side. In truth, however, it is a mistake to regard the necessity of obedience to law as a limitation of freedom. Liberty must not be confounded with license. The one is essentially rational, the other irrational. Obedience to law is, in fact, only another name for rational action, and is, therefore, an exercise of freedom. Or, put it thus, regarded from the point of view of the spirit, law is the consistency of reason with itself. As reasonable beings, we create our own experience and the laws which pervade it. These laws are,

[1] *See* Illingworth, *Divine Immanence*, App. II., for a somewhat different discussion of this question.

therefore, for us, the expression of our own reason, and obedience to them is merely self-consistency. In submitting to the limitations imposed by the laws of nature we are self-limited and therefore free. To many minds this argument will perhaps seem a quibble. But it is not so. The laws of nature appear to us a bondage put upon us from without, because nature as a whole is a vast system which overpowers our little experience; and because, in nature, law, as it affects us, is in close union with another element which constitutes a real limitation of our freedom, an element which claims our immediate attention.

Secondly, will is limited by the collocations of nature. Nature is governed by laws, but it consists of things, as we call them. These things are grouped in ways of which we can, for the most part, give no rational account. The state of science is such that it is quite impossible to say how far this grouping is the result of the operation of strictly rational law, and how far it may be due to some primeval arrangement concerning which we can say nothing, or again, how far it has been affected by the actions of persons and living creatures. We have no need, however, to enter into these questions. It is enough that,

for us, these collocations contribute very largely to the contingent element in our experience, and therefore constitute a real limitation of the freedom of the will. Now it is the fact that the laws of nature operate throughout this vast domain which is, to us, contingent, which makes those laws appear to us an alien power to which we must bow, instead of the expression of reason, a reason which as truly belongs to our own inmost self as to the power which gives being to nature. To take an illustration, the fact that we cannot create energy is not in itself a limitation of our freedom. In the abstract, it is only an instance of rational consistency within experience. The real limitation of freedom, as regards our relation to the energy of the material universe, consists in the way in which the various forms and quantities of energy which affect us are grouped. They do not contribute, by means of an unbroken rational connexion with the rest of our experience, to the harmony of life. Too often they seem opposing forces with which we have to struggle. And then it is that we find ourselves rebelling against the law which forbids the creation of energy, ignorant that if we could break that law we should be introducing a con-

fusion infinitely greater than that which we seek to harmonise.

How, we must ask, is this contingent element in experience due to the arrangement of natural things to be regarded from the spiritual point of view? Here, apparently, we find mere brute force controlling spiritual activity. Yet, if the principles we have followed all through are correct, brute force and the things of the material world exist for spirit only as they are determined by spirit. In this difficulty let us turn back to the teaching we derived from a consideration of human solidarity. We found that there is a contingent element in the experience of every individual spirit which owes its origin to the relations in which he stands to other human spirits. The freedom of each is exercised under limitations imposed by the freedoms of all the rest. Hence arises a blending of the rational with the contingent. But we saw in lecture ii. that nature must be regarded as a great experience, an experience which exists for God. God is personal. He gives possibility to nature. And the great experience of God, which we call nature, must limit the experience of every human thinker in so far as God is

personal. In the limitations then which are imposed upon us by the collocations of nature we find an additional reason for believing in the personality of God.

In this second class of limitations must also be included an element in experience which from its fundamental position and peculiar character is very difficult of examination. The sensible material which intelligence organises and out of which it constructs its cosmos has, running throughout it from the very beginning, a strongly-marked vein of contingency. This material consists of the data supplied to thought and will by the senses, our sensations and impressions, as they are commonly called. To Berkeley, sensations supplied a basis for idealism, because he saw that they are mental through and through. They demand a mind in which to exist or they cannot exist at all. To the modern intellectual idealist on the other hand they frequently appear a difficulty, because they do not take their place in experience in a perfectly rational way, and therefore cannot be referred to the intelligence or self, as their sole determining principle. That they are determined by the intelligence which grasps them is evident from this that they always

occur in relation to one another and to the whole of experience; and, we must remember, relation is another name for determination by the self. But that this determination is not a complete account of them appears from the fact that over and above there remains that element of contingency which has been just now referred to.

It will be remembered that, in the illustration of the panorama which we have found so useful, it was stated that "every one of us has painted for himself the picture within which he is shut up, and he is perpetually painting and repainting it, not by copying from some original, but by arranging and completing confused images and tints that are always appearing magically on his canvas". This magical appearance of confused images and tints on the canvas of the individual's experience is an admirable representation of the contingency of the sensible material with which the intelligence has to deal. From the very dawn of consciousness the things we know are "given to" us. They enter into our knowledge because we, in the very act of knowledge, put them into relation with all the other contents of our minds. From this point of view we determine them. But we do not completely determine them, because there is

another point of view from which it is seen that to us they preserve a contingent or "magical" character. They arise out of the mysterious world which lies beyond the bounds of our panorama. To us they are the proof that there is such a world. Their contingency can meet with no other explanation.

In the light of all that has gone before, it is evident that this world beyond our panorama must be regarded as a spiritual world, a world of persons. The universe which lies around us, and which conditions all our activities, is not the collection of things in space and time. When we think of ourselves as spiritual beings creating our own experience, then we must make a corresponding ascent in our way of regarding the universe. It becomes a universe of persons, God and all spirits. And just because it is a universe of persons we are limited by it on every side. The contingency of the sensible matter of experience is the fact which proves that, in all our activities, we are surrounded and limited by the activity of some great reality, which cannot be less than spiritual.

It is no small satisfaction to find that this view helps us to understand elements in the philo-

sophies of Kant and Berkeley which have often proved puzzling, points on which those two great thinkers have met with much unfavourable criticism. To Berkeley, a question of first-rate importance was, Whence come our sensations? We do not make them. True, they are essentially mental. They exist only for spirit. But to say this, is not to give a sufficient account of their origin. The answer which Berkeley gives is that sensations (or ideas, as he calls them) come to us from a spirit more exalted than our own, for spirit only could produce them. God gives them to us. This was Berkeley's proof of the being of God, and this was the part of his philosophy which was most precious in the eyes of its author. If there is any soundness in the conclusions to which we have been led, Berkeley was not far wrong. The statement of his doctrine was, however, inevitably imperfect, because the intellectual side of idealism had not been developed, and before that development became possible, there had to come the scepticism of Hume, and the criticism of Kant.

The element of Kant's philosophy which has met with the most severe treatment is perhaps his doctrine of the thing-in-itself. Kant held

that, though we can know nothing beyond the phenomena of experience because things exist for us only as we make them, yet "sensation witnesses to the presence of an object which produces it". He held that "there are bodies without us, that is things, which though quite unknown to us as to what they are in themselves, we yet know by the representations which their influence on our sensibility procures us, and which we call bodies".[1] It is the fact that in sensibility our own activity cannot account for everything which forced Kant to his doctrine of the thing-in-itself. He demanded "something to correspond to our receptivity". Now we have seen that the element in sensibility for which our own activity cannot account is its contingency. And, as we have already concluded, contingency can only be explained on the principle that we exert our spiritual activities under limitations imposed by spiritual activities other than our own. In this particular case we can find an explanation only in the Spirit which makes nature possible.

[1] Translated by Professor Mahaffy. See *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, by Professors Mahaffy and Bernard, vol. i., chap. xiv., p. 207, and vol. ii., p. 54.

A third class of limitations to freedom includes those which spring from our own conduct. Action creates habit, and habit influences future action. Character grows with every exercise of our spiritual powers, and, if it does not altogether control, it certainly affects conduct. Thus we seem to be continually setting limits to our own liberty. But these limits, we must remember, are self-created. They prove, not the bondage, but the freedom of the will. In this case again it is necessary to show how the appearance of bondage arises. It is surely because in many cases the will is exercised in the wrong way, and thus there spring into being evil habits which are a real limitation of liberty. But this very fact is a testimony to the freedom of the will.

A *fourth class* of limitations contains those which have been dealt with above at considerable length, those which have their origin in the actions of other persons. These as we have seen are real limitations. They appear in experience as contingent elements.

On the whole, then, the limitations which form real restrictions imposed upon the freedom of the will, are due to the exercise of freedom on the

part of other rational beings. They arise from the self-determining agency of persons, including under the head of persons the Divine Agent as well as the multitude of human beings.

Now this is exactly what a rigorous application of the principles already reached would lead us to expect. For the phenomena of experience cannot limit spirit. They occur within the bounds of spirit, and are its creatures. *Spirit finds its limit when it meets with spirit.* In other words, persons restrict the range of one another's activity. And, indeed, they must do so, from the very fact that they are mutually exclusive. It is just because spirits do not inter-penetrate (because no person can enter the panorama of another person) that they impose limits the one upon the other. And it is for this very reason that they must be held to form a community dwelling in that ultimate unity which belongs to God. We thus reach a synthesis of individualism and solidarity. Man can be free, he can retain the full privilege of his self-hood, and yet be a member of a community. And the presupposition which renders this synthesis possible is that the ultimate Divine Unity is super-personal.

It will help us to understand the bearing of this somewhat protracted discussion, if *we now pause and consider how we stand as regards the doctrine of freedom.* Man is free because he is a self-determining subject or person. Freedom is then the essential characteristic of will. In so far as man exercises the faculty of volition, he is free. In the words of Hegel, "Freedom constitutes the substance and essential character of the will".[1] "Will without freedom is an empty word, and freedom becomes actual only as will, as subject."[2] We must, therefore, reject the view held by some, that freedom is a power possessed by the will, and used only on occasions when there has been a solemn deliberation upon several possible courses of conduct, and that, in its ordinary and hasty decisions, will is not free, but under the dominion of the strongest motive. According to the doctrine here adopted, the will is free in all its actions, that is, every action which is truly volitional is free. And this freedom exists just because the will is governed by motives. The motive is the idea of the end at which the action aims. It occurs in

[1] Hegel, *Philosophy of Right.* Dyde's translation, p. 10.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

consciousness, and is therefore determined by the self. Motived volition is therefore self-determined action, and is consequently free.

But though will is always free,[1] it is not on that account possessed of boundless sway. It is limited in the sphere within which it can carry out its designs. The will of God, as manifested in nature, shuts it in on every side. The wills of other finite spirits restrict it further in a multitude of ways. These limitations appear in experience as contingent elements which cannot be eliminated. So far as experience is rationally articulated from the point of view of the subject, so far is the man free. So far as the elements which, from the same point of view, are contingent prevail, so far is the man limited.

But there is a further restriction which has been already pointed out. It is self-created, and therefore an instance of freedom, but at the same time it causes a contraction of the sphere within which the future exercise of freedom will be possible. There is wrong action as well as right action. The former consists of the pursuit of ends which do not fully realise the possibilities of the self. The scope of the rational element

[1] See pp. 101, 102.

in the life is diminished. Right action, on the contrary, is the true realisation of the self, the widest possible extension of the rational element. Thus a man may be said to be free when he lives a rational life, when he realises what he has it in him to be, when he acts according to the fulness of his own proper nature.

If a man could develop unrestricted, unencumbered by the limitations which arise from nature and society, supposing such a thing possible, it is not easy to see how there could be, for him, any distinction between freedom and necessity. The distinction might be logically possible as that between the whole of experience and its parts, but the identity would be so complete that there would be no occasion to separate the two points of view. To recur to the old illustration, the man's life would be like a sphere growing out from its centre equally in all directions. There would be no reason why he should ask, Am I free or am I necessitated?

But that is not the situation of any one. The image of the self-evolving sphere must now, in the fuller knowledge we have gained, be modified. Each person has an irregular space in which to develop, a space which varies in size and char-

acter according as the man deals with the opportunities of his life, that is, according as he reacts upon his limitations. Thus there occurs the problem of a better and a worse, and the question of the man's life becomes, How can I deal with circumstances so that I may grow to the amplest form and dimensions possible?

Here then we have *a new conception of the relation between character and circumstances*. Character does take its rise from the reaction of the will upon circumstances, but these circumstances affect the will through the medium of consciousness, and enter consciousness as contingent elements in the cosmos of experience. They mark the points and lines of contact between the self and the surrounding spiritual universe. And they make possible a variety of experience and a range of choice which could have no existence otherwise. Apart from this variety the problem of the better and the worse, the great problem of every man's life, would be impossible.

Freedom then can be exercised in opposite and different ways. If wrongly exercised it involves a further limitation of itself, it stunts the man's future growth. If exercised aright it opens out

for itself wider and nobler possibilities. In the former case reason has been used to thwart reason, it has subserved the irrational. In the latter case it has made possible a greater and nobler development of the rational. And this leads to a second and very well-known sense of freedom. It is often said that the good man gains his freedom, that evil is bondage, goodness liberty. Here is the justification of this usage, and the link which connects it with the freedom of the will in the first sense. There is a fundamental connexion between them. Freedom in the first sense means the man's power to become more or less rational; freedom in the second sense means the character of greater rationality which he acquires when he makes a proper use of that power.

A remarkable result has now been obtained. We have reached a position from which we can see that even individual experience demands the super-personal unity as its ultimate ground. The self is seen to be an insufficient presupposition, because it cannot explain the contingency which forms so large an element in experience, when experience is regarded from the individual point of view. This contingent element cannot be referred to

any principle lower than spirit in the scale of being. It must be explained by the relations in which the individual stands to all other spirits, and this whole multitude of spirits must have its bond of union in a higher principle. Thus the insufficiency of the individual point of view, and of the self as an ultimate presupposition becomes manifest. We find that individual experience is impossible, unless we go deeper than the self, and presuppose a principle of unification which combines in one universe the whole multitude of spirits, and which at the same time preserves to every individual spirit its full prerogative of self-determination. Only by means of such a presupposition can man's moral and spiritual being be preserved intact, and at the same time, the faith be maintained that the Absolute, the concrete universal, is ultimately One.

A difficulty which is likely to arise at this point concerns one of the most popular conceptions of the present day: *the rationality of history*. Does not the view of freedom as an individual possession, which we have adopted, destroy the rationality of history, and is it not therefore to be rejected at once as fundamentally unsound? How can history form a rational progress if every

person is possessed of free self-determination, and is able to shape the course of events? This is a question which it is necessary to ask and to answer, because the discussion of it will be found to assist to the understanding of our position.

The necessity of a natural process consists in the fact that every element in the whole, every stage in the process, is connected with every other element in such a way that it cannot be otherwise than it is in order to form the whole. And it is this very characteristic which constitutes the rationality of the process. The whole is rational because it is a perfectly articulated system of necessary relations. Now since the process is rational it moves to an end which is its explanation. The whole is the expression of purpose. This is only another way of stating the truth already dwelt upon at length that "freedom is the truth of necessity". Hence we see that the most perfect example of physical causation which it is possible to conceive involves a spiritual meaning. But this does not save the separate relations of the process from being necessary in the strictest sense of the term. No place is left for interference by spiritual forces acting on the process from without. The course

of events moves on in a way which is absolutely inevitable.

But a historical process properly so called is very different from a physical process of this kind. The interaction of a multitude of separate wills takes the place of the play of natural forces. In this case our common experience teaches us that, somehow or other, the individual can by his volition modify the course of events. Does the process then become irrational and unaccountable? Has cosmos departed and chaos taken its place? Such a conclusion could result only from a very imperfect grasp of the phenomena of ethical experience. A historical process is unlike a physical process in the nature of its elements and in the manner of their connexion, but the two are alike in this respect, that in both the whole movement is controlled by an idea, and is therefore rational. But how in the case of the historical process is the idea operative? Is it to be regarded as the inner meaning of a necessary series, each link of which is an unconscious and unintending element in the whole? Quite otherwise. The historical process is controlled by an idea, because the idea itself is more or less clearly the idea of the end

consciously aimed at by the persons whose activity operates in the process.[1] History is rational because men have great ruling ideas, and because these great ruling ideas are themselves systematic, organically connected and subordinated to certain supreme principles. In fact the rationality of history comes about only through the intervention of the individual consciousness and will. Society would be impossible but for the existence of ruling ideas, conceptions of ends which appeal to the many as "goods" worth striving for. These "goods" are not merely sought by each for himself. If that were all, social coherence, and therefore historical process, would be impossible. The ends must, to some extent at all events, present themselves as aspects of a common good. This is their co-ordinating principle, and by means of it all are brought under one supreme idea, the idea of the good. The idea of the good is the rationalising principle of history.

History then is rational, not because men are subject to necessity, but because they aim at ends which are common, and the pursuit of these ends is an exercise of freedom. Freedom, or self-

[1] See *Short Study of Ethics*, p. 108, note.

determination, is essentially the activity of a self realising itself in an end. Purpose, end, freedom, are all different ways of expressing the same thing. And just because history is rationalised through the pursuit of a common good, through the idea of an end which, with more or less clearness, is conceived by the multitudes of the human race, the rationality of history comes about, not through necessity, but through freedom.

And here we find ourselves again face to face with the superpersonal. We discern the presence of a great concrete unity in which all men live and move and have their being. This unity is the home of spirits, and their bond of union. Its existence is implied in the fact that the one great idea of the good is the rationalising principle of human history. But it is not the unity of a single person, because, as we have seen, persons are mutually exclusive, their connexions being marked by the presence of the contingent, while this unity includes all spirits, and makes them ultimately one. But, though it is not the unity of a single person, it possesses personality; for it is the medium in which the idea of the good exists, and by means of which that idea is made to be the common possession of the human race.

We are now able to see what is meant by the supernatural, and in what region of experience we are to find it. Broadly speaking, the supernatural refers to the relations between spirits, and it is detected by the presence of the contingent. Where the will of another introduces, into the individual's experience, an element which cannot be referred to the individual's own reason and will, *there* is the supernatural. So long as the *other*, to whose will the contingent element is referred, is an ordinary human being clothed in flesh and blood, this contingent element seems scarcely to deserve the name supernatural, though in strictness it must be so described. If, however, a contingent element can be detected in experience which cannot be referred to ordinary human beings, we have the supernatural in its more familiar signification. And here surely, assuming that such facts exist, it must be confessed that the only possible explanation is that which attributes the disturbance to the operation of spiritual agencies. We cannot seek for an explaining cause (to use the word in an admissible sense) lower down in the scale of being. If it be true that there has appeared in experience a contingent element which cannot be referred to

ordinary human agency, then a spiritual originator must be assumed to exist. Here we have the satisfaction of having common-sense on our side. Ordinary opinion has always held this view.

Further, the relations which human beings bear to God belong to the realm of the supernatural. God is personal, and it is possible that we may find, in the history of the world, contingent elements which can only be attributed to the action of Divine Personality. God is also more than personal, and between Him, as He is in His ultimate nature, and human spirits there hangs a veil of mystery.

Sometimes we hear from the lips of those who have accepted mere evolution as a complete gospel, and also from those who have succeeded in translating the evolutionary creed into a shallow self-satisfied idealism, bold words which assert the utter exclusion of mystery from the domain of fact and experience. But the best thought of the day does not fall into the feeble sciolism of such an intellectual attitude as this. The most daringly destructive, and at the same time the most elaborately constructive, of all living philosophers, declares that his conclusions explain and confirm "the irresistible impression that all

is beyond us".[1] It is only another way of stating the existence of the supernatural in this higher sense in which we identify it with the space which divides the human spirit from God in His inmost essence. Yet here is no vapid "unknowable". For God is knowable in so far as He is personal, and is therefore an object of trust, of love, and of imitation. But there are in Him deeper depths of being; an awful mystery; a unity, majestic, all-inclusive, overwhelming; a greatness so surpassing that our thoughts concerning it can but echo the cry of the Seraphim, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts. The fulness of the whole earth is His glory."

[1] Bradley, *Appearances and Reality*, p. 549.

LECTURE IV.

INCARNATION AND MIRACLE.

Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work (John v. 17).

FROM the position which we have now reached we are able to look round us, and observe the main features of the territory we have explored. We have been engaged in a rapid survey of human experience in its two aspects, thought and conduct, and have arrived at results which contrast strongly with those of certain leading philosophical schools. Materialism explains by reference to the atoms. For it, the universe is a material order. Idealism explains by reference to personality or selfness. For it, the universe is a spiritual order. We have been able to advance a step farther to what is essentially the Christian position. For us, the universe is a social order.

It needs but little thought to see how characteristic of Christianity is this conception. Chris-

tianity has taught men to believe in social relationship existing within the ultimate unity of the Godhead ; and Christianity has given to the world the great ethical idea of the kingdom of the good. These things belong to the very life of the religion. It is an extraordinary thing that the conception of Deity which is the most difficult for thought, which to the hasty thinker seems the most perverse piece of philosophising ever attempted, should have triumphed in the struggle with Arianism and Sabellianism, systems so much more attractive to mere intelligence. The truth is, the Trinitarian doctrine corresponds to the true genius of Christianity and to the needs of human life. Athanasius may have been against the world, but he prevailed because he represented the truth which the world required. It was the fittest which survived.

Still more obvious in its correspondence to the genius of Christianity is the idea of the kingdom of the good. The thought of the kingdom fills the mind of the Christ of the Gospels. To establish and advance the kingdom Christ came and lived and died. The moral law, in the highest expression of which it is capable, is in His teaching the law of the kingdom. History

finds its end in the kingdom. So does the individual man. The moral end of man is not merely personal holiness: rather, it is the filling of the proper position in the kingdom. For this surely is the interpretation of the law of love in terms of the Christian life, an interpretation to be found in varying forms in every book of the New Testament. For Christianity then, God works, and man is to live, with a view to the kingdom.

With these two great leading Christian conceptions, the results which we gained in the first three lectures are in perfect harmony. If we did not reach the doctrine of social relationship within the ultimate unity of the Godhead, we, at least, reached the principle which makes that doctrine possible. We found the personality of God implied in the existence of nature, and we also found that the ultimate unity, which is His, must be superpersonal. These results imply that a personal multiplicity is possible for God.

We also arrived at the idea of a universal community, including all persons, and bound together by the all-encircling sphere of the Divine Unity; a conception of the universe which is truly social, because, while it emphasises the solidarity of the whole multitude of persons,

it preserves the individuality of every member. Here is the thought of the universe as a kingdom of God, a kingdom not yet perfected, but moving on to that perfection which is the universal good.

We have seen reason to believe in the possibility of a personal multiplicity in the unity of the Godhead. The question arises: Assuming that such multiplicity exists, how is it to be detected? Certain considerations which came to light in the course of the last lecture seem to supply an answer to this question. If God be multipersonal, we must expect to find in nature elements which, relatively to each other, are contingent, yet which are equally world-wide in scope and importance. If God were simply one person, one intelligence, then nature should reveal on examination a system perfectly rational from end to end. There would be no breaks, no inexplicable elements. The ideal of science would be perfectly realised. Physical necessity would reign triumphant throughout the whole domain of fact. The universe would become utterly intelligible.

If, however, there is a personal multiplicity in the Godhead, we must expect to find in nature contingent elements which, in kind and extent, are worthy of being attributed to a Divine

originator. These elements may be expected to assume the character of interferences with the course of nature, in the same sense in which contingent elements, due to the agency of other wills, are interferences with the rational sequence of the individual's experience. With this qualification, however, that since the Divine Persons must be always in harmony, while human persons are in frequent disagreement, the word interference in the former case must be freed from that implication of hostility, or opposition, which is so frequently involved in it in the latter.

Contingent elements in nature, which mark the presence and operation of a Divine Person, must be superhuman. But this is not enough, for angels or devils might be credited with superhuman performances. The true test of their divinity is rather that they should be world-wide in scope, and have reference to the end to which the whole process of nature is directed. In other words, they should have universal significance with a view to the realisation of the good. If we find, in the regular succession of natural causes, interferences which have obviously taken place for the purpose of preparing the way for the coming of the kingdom of God, we are surely

justified in attributing the disturbance to a Divine Person.

And here no doubt will intrude the old objection which always makes so strong an appeal to common-sense: Is not this to suppose that the Almighty is like a clock-maker who is so clumsy at his trade that he cannot make a clock to go correctly, but only so imperfectly that he has to meddle with it from time to time in order to make it do what he intended? Which, it will be said, is the most worthy conception of God, that which assumes that the universe is so constructed that it must by its own laws attain the end for which it was designed, or that which holds that it was so bad a piece of workmanship at the beginning, that only continual interference could make it follow the intended course of development?

This seems a pretty piece of reasoning as long as the old deistic conception of God retains any hold on the mind. While the universe is supposed to be related to God as the machine is related to the engineer who made it, it is not easy to give a satisfactory answer. But this external conception of the Divine nature is not now seriously maintained. Transcendence in this form is a doctrine of the past. All schools of

thought are now agreed that, whatever else He may be, God must be regarded as immanent in the universe. The objection is, therefore, based on an inadequate analogy. Since God is to be regarded as immanent, we must expect to find in the universe traces of all that essentially belongs to the Divine nature. If that nature were personal, and no more than personal, if God, that is, were simply One Person, one intelligence, the supposition of interferences in the course of nature would be inadmissible, the contingent would be excluded. But if there is in God's transcendent unity a personal multiplicity, then we must expect to be able to trace in that universe, which is one aspect of the Divine life, marks of the operation of agencies which are personally distinct, but which reveal their ultimate unity because they combine to promote the end to which the whole is moving.

Thus we see that, while on grounds of Unitarian Theism, this old objection occupies a strong position, it carries no conviction whatever to the mind of the Trinitarian who realises his philosophical position.

It is also noteworthy that the objection loses all semblance of plausibility when the nature of

the end to which the universe is moving is considered. The good, let it be remembered, is not the end of a mechanical process. It is an end which can be realised only through moral beings. It belongs to the very nature of morality that it is possible only through the exercise of freedom. A necessitated goodness is a contradiction in terms. To require the Almighty to produce goodness by clock-work is simply to talk nonsense. But, further, the good is not to be thought of as an end which is to be realised in this or that good individual. It is perhaps best described as the kingdom of God in its perfection. It is an end, that is, which can be brought about only through the co-operation of a multitude of persons. And to suppose that even the natural environment in which was to take place that co-operation of human wills which was to bring about the coming of the kingdom must have been fitted for its purpose by a purely mechanical process is to make, at the least, an unwarranted assumption. Nor is it honouring to God, for it is assuming Him to act as mere person, while in the fulness of His nature we know Him to be more than person. How much more likely is it

that, if the triumph of the good requires the co-operation of a multitude of human persons, the conditions of the struggle out of which that triumph was to come required the activity of the Deity in His superpersonal fulness.

These considerations seem to be important. Of late years attention has been very frequently directed to the fact that science points to certain "new beginnings" in the history of creation. At each of these epochs the whole course of development was lifted to a higher level in the scale of being. The most notable instances are the beginnings of motion, of life, and of consciousness. In these cases there seems to be strong, almost irresistible, demonstration that the regular series of natural causes was broken in upon by some extraordinary influence. Here we seem to detect a contingent element in nature very like that which occurs in individual experience through the operation of some other will. So striking is the parallel that it is not at all surprising that these instances were seized upon by the eagerly orthodox and presented as incontrovertible proofs of creative activity. But they did not convince as readily as was expected; and surely, by this time, we are able to see the

reason. The failure arose from the fact that they were put forward in a way which seemed to aim at restoring the old Deistic conception of God. The argument represented God as a great artificer standing by His machine and from time to time introducing into it fresh improvements. It could carry no conviction to minds which had grasped a view of God higher than that which thought of Him as an incomparably clever workman dealing with a given material.[1] And so we find as a natural consequence that of late theological thought has persistently turned away from this striking argument. The glorious idea of the immanence of God has dawned upon the minds of theologians, and any break in continuity seems to spoil the perfection of that Divine life which is the very being of the universe. It would be possible to point to recent books in which, with the view apparently of strengthening religious faith, every effort is made to minimise the significance of the "new beginnings".

And, all the while, the means of harmonising

[1] This higher view is an old one after all :—

"ἔσται δέ, εἰ οὕτως ἔχει, κατ' αὐτοὺς ὁ Θεὸς τεχνίτης μόνον καὶ οὐ κτιστὴς εἰς τὸ εἶναι, εἰ τὴν ὑποκειμένην ὕλην ἐργάζεται, τῆς δὲ ὕλης οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτὸς αἴτιος." Athanasius. The Incarnation, II., § 4.

these apparently discrepant elements of truth, was lying close at hand. The Christian conception of Godhead is not that of a single person, or principle of rational unity, whether immanent in nature or external to it. Christianity teaches us to think of God as multipersonal unity, and in that thought we have the clue to the difficulty. God is both immanent and transcendent. As person, or rational intelligence, He is immanent in nature. As multipersonal, He transcends nature, and interferes in nature, just as one human will interferes in the experience of another. As superpersonal, He unites all in one, and occupies a position of transcendency in a higher sense. Or, to put the matter in a simpler way, because God lives and moves in His universe in the fulness of His multipersonal nature, creation will show a blending of rational or necessary progress with the action and interaction of distinct personalities.

When we consider how vague, how blurred, how broken, are the outlines which science has been able to draw of the past history of creation, we have every reason to be filled with wonder that these notable epoch-making instances of creative activity stand out so distinctly. We

have here surely an indication that, if it were possible for us to know in greater detail the order of events as they took place during the countless ages of the past, we should find creative interference much more frequent than we are now inclined to suspect. We forget a circumstance which must in most cases make interference of this kind indiscernible by us: if a Divine Person interposes, He does so, *not* for the purpose of creating disorder, or producing a sudden and striking interruption of the regular course of things, but for the purpose of bringing about the kingdom of the good, with the view, that is, of furthering progress, not retarding it. The consequence of His interference then will always be *increased rationality in the succession of events*, and the very perfection of the artist will hide his art. When we think of the vast share which *variation* is supposed to have had in the production of species, and when we consider further that variation is for the ordinary evolutionist a matter of *chance*, we discern something of the extent of the field of possibility within which the work of a creative Person would be most certainly concealed by its very perfection.

Without at all descending into particulars, we

have understood enough to see that the Christian conception of God as multipersonal unity supplies a presupposition which corresponds far more nearly to the facts to which science testifies than does the idealist conception of a single rational principle or the Deistic conception of a Workman-God. It would indeed be a serious mistake to attempt to descend into particulars, to seek to understand the "how" of Divine interference. If the word *interference* is admitted for lack of a better it must not be taken to mean that the mode of action and interaction between Divine Persons is similar to that between human persons, or similar to that by which a human person interferes in the course of nature. The whole point of the argument is that the history of creation, so far as we know anything about it, exhibits that blending of necessity and contingency which marks the presence and operation of distinct Persons, while the unity of aim in the service of the good which pervades the whole forces upon us the conviction that here we have to do with a Divine life which, though multipersonal, is yet one.

A recent writer observes that "some theistic apologists" seem to be "under an impression

that while God may be in the *usual*, He is far more certainly to be found in the *unusual*, where the evolutionary process passes into some new phase and makes a remarkable new departure". And on this he remarks "that it may be the reverse of an advantage to faith to lay an excessive emphasis on the occasional preternatural action of God upon the world". "The man," he continues, "who clings eagerly to the primitive impulse that set evolution going, to the origination of life, and to the inspiration of a living soul, as proofs that God exists, virtually declares that in all other parts of the history of the universe he finds no convincing evidence of God's being and power. And what, one may ask, is the good of such a Deity after you have verified His existence to your own satisfaction? He is a far-off, absentee, otiose Divinity. How much better to find God everywhere, than here and there at rare intervals; ever active, not merely rousing Himself out of an age-long sleep to do marvellous things now and then; active in the movements of every molecule as it enters into combination with its neighbours, not less than in the initial push that set all the molecules agoing; revealing Himself as the Fountain of

Life in the minutest variations that condition the development of species, as well as in the fiat by which life first came into being."[1]

The warning should be heeded by every Deist and Unitarian, and by every one who clings to the old conception of transcendence. But, surely, both modes of the Divine activity are significant and important. We must neither ignore the regular movement of physical causation, that we may prove the existence of the transcendent God of Deism, nor must we slight the great creative epochs, lest by recognising them we should take away from the perfection of the Divine immanence. In necessity, in the regular succession of natural events, we must discern the immanence of Divine reason. As the ego creates and inhabits its own experience (not as soul dwells in body, that is a misleading analogy[2]), so does God

[1] A. B. Bruce, *The Providential Order*, lecture iii., pp. 49 and 60.

[2] It is surprising to find this analogy sanctioned by Mr. Illingworth in his *Divine Immanence*. See chap. iii. from p. 65. Especially pp. 72, 73. It is surely impossible now to base a doctrine of Divine immanence on any lower principle than the Hegelian one, the immanence of self-consciousness in experience.

Professor Bruce adopts the same position as Mr. Illingworth. See his *Providential Order*, pp. 58 and 59.

create and inhabit nature. As the ego creates experience according to the rule of reason, which is the rule of necessity, so does God create His world, and it becomes a rationally-ordered cosmos, a reign of law. Nature is therefore full of reason, full of necessity. So far we have regarded God as personal. But if God be also superpersonal, and multipersonal, as Christian theology insists, we shall find more than mere law and the regular succession of necessary events. We shall find a contingent element marking the interaction of different persons. And this is exactly what we do find. And, further, we shall find that the elements which are necessary, and those which, relatively to them, are contingent, unite to form one universal system, and conspire to bring about that "great, far-off, Divine event to which the whole creation moves".

The bearing of all this upon the question of *miracle* is obvious. It yields a view of the world as a state of things in which miracle is sure to occur if occasion demands it. If the coming of the kingdom of the good requires miracle, miracle will be. And here let it be noted that the conception of miracle which has come to light is strikingly Christian. We have seen that, in

order to be credited with a Divine origin, contingent elements in nature must have universal significance with a view to the realisation of the good. In other words, they are proved to be Divine, because they bear a Divine character, not because they are wonderful, or superhuman exhibitions of wisdom or of power, or even of goodness. They have world-wide scope, and they occur in a manner which proves them to be turning-points on the way to the kingdom of God. And this is precisely the character of the Christian miracles. The life, death and resurrection of Christ constitute the most universally significant group of events in history. They are also, among all events, those which are most clearly designed to promote the coming of the kingdom.

Of all miracles, however, the incarnation, regarded as a historical event, is that which is most characteristic of Christianity, most obviously universal in significance, and most important from the point of view which we have now reached. The general idea of incarnation is, of course, in complete accord with the idea of immanence. All nature is filled with God. He is in all, and His life is the life of all. The higher and the

fuller any element in nature is the more of God is present in it. Especially God is to be discerned in man, but above all in the best of men. In this form the doctrine of incarnation seems to commend itself to many who at the present time profess a creed which, however it be named, is in truth a species of pantheism. But this is not the Christian doctrine of the incarnation. Christianity holds that Christ is a Divine Person in a unique sense, that He is One with the universal Father, and Himself universal in His relation to creation at large. Now this doctrine demands as its presuppositions precisely the conceptions of the Divine nature and of Divine immanence which we have found to be implied in human experience and in the history of creation as revealed by science. Only here the personal character of the interference is fully revealed. In all the great epochs of cosmic history can be discerned the intervention of some creative power. That power is personal, we have seen reason to believe. Each intervention has the effect of lifting creation a stage higher in the scale of being. From motion to life, from life to consciousness. At last, in the very focus of human history, appears a Person who in

character, in the circumstances of His career, in His moral influence, in the universality of His relation to mankind, in the meaning which He imparts to human life, in the position which He professedly, as well as actually, holds with regard to the kingdom of the good, is absolutely unique, a miracle among men. Here is another turning-point in the course of development. How are we to regard it? Surely, it is the work of the same personal agent which operated at the other epochs. And since the peculiarity of the case consists in the fact that a miraculous Person has appeared whose life has universal significance with a view to the realisation of the kingdom of the good, the inevitable conclusion must be that it is He, Himself. Or, to imitate the mode of expression which we have adopted hitherto, the principle underlying the incarnation regarded as a historical event is precisely the presupposition which we have found to be involved in experience and in life.[1]

[1] It has been urged as an objection against comparing the Incarnation to the "new beginnings" revealed by science, that these beginnings (*e.g.*, life) appear to have taken place as very minute differences, while the Incarnation, as conceived by the orthodox, constitutes a very great difference, a huge breach in continuity. But, first, it is

In discussions which deal with the question of *miracle*, ingenious illustrations are used to show that it is unnecessary to suppose that the miraculous is a violation of law. It might seem that it is scarcely necessary for us to touch on this question, because, from the point of view which we have now reached, a miracle is no more a violation of law than is the action by which any personal agent produces a change in nature. There is, however, this to be said: in a sense a higher law must be supposed. When we come to consider the relations between persons we attempt to enter a region where the wings of thought find no atmosphere to support them. We cannot rise to a position from which we can behold all persons united in a higher unity. The principle which makes all persons

obvious that we are not qualified to judge as to what is great or small in this sense; and secondly, the dissipation of energy proves that new beginnings were not always small, as we understand smallness. The dissipation of energy means that, throughout the whole course of physical history, the energy of the universe has been running down towards a dead level of equality of distribution. The beginning of all dynamic activity must therefore have been, not a slight difference in the distribution of energy, but a gigantic difference—a difference great enough to contain the potentiality of all motion from the beginning until the end.

one is the very inmost shrine of Deity, and there we cannot enter. But we must assume it to exist. We must believe in a unity higher than the unity of personality. For the present the belief may be regarded as simply regulative, but none the less it is for us the ultimate basis of all things. What it is for God we know not.

In ethics we talk of social solidarity, and conceive it under the category of organic unity. The conception serves as a useful working approximation to the truth. In religion, we speak of all men as one in Christ. The expression is mystical, but it is nearer the final truth than is the formula of ethics. In the light of the thoughts which we have been led to in the course of this lecture, it is seen to be perhaps the fullest expression of the Deity of the Son that human language can frame. It attributes to Him, in addition to His Personality, that superpersonal unity which is, for us, the distinguishing mark of Godhead as contrasted with manhood. And the New Testament is filled with this thought. "I am the vine," says Christ, "ye are the branches."[1] "That they may be one," He prays, "even as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may

[1] John xv. 5.

be perfected into one."[1] "Ye all are one in Christ Jesus,"[2] St. Paul asserts. And in another place he declares that the Divine purpose is "to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth".[3]

"My Father worketh hitherto and I work," said Christ. It was a great assertion. Those who heard it detected at once the vastness of the claim which it implied. But how vast becomes its meaning if we venture to interpret it by means of the scheme of thought which we now possess. God the Father works eternally, giving existence, continuance, law to the whole universe. God the Son is also at work, building up out of the materials so supplied the city of God, the kingdom of the good. The Father is the source of being, the Son is the agent who performs the distinctively creative acts. And these are one; for throughout the whole there runs a unity of aim which even we can discern. But this mode of expressing the ultimate unity is relative to us. It is in terms which belong to personal intelligence, and which are therefore inadequate. Above and beneath and around all is the transcendent Unity

[1] John xvii. 22, 23. [2] Gal. iii. 28.
[3] Eph. i. 10.

of the Godhead, the perfect unity, which must involve, from the Divine point of view, a co-operation so intimate that human experience provides no figure which can serve to represent it.

LECTURE V.

EVIL AND ATONEMENT.

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John iii. 8).

THERE are some problems so great that, by kind of tacit understanding, modern men h almost unanimously agreed to ignore them. E philosophers, whose business it is to deal w them, frequently shirk their duty and feel in doing so, because they are certain that ot philosophers will be equally remiss. Nor are theologians in any better case. Such questi as Divine foreknowledge and the existence evil are labelled insoluble and placed as cu on the Divinity shelf.

As against antitheology, theology is at libe to behave in this manner. These probl perplex the unbeliever as well as the Christ Let the objector urge an argument wh involves any one of them and there come ready *Tu quoque*. The great theological puz

are identical with the great philosophical puzzles. It is not Christianity which has failed to solve them, it is human thought as a whole. If the difficulty is an argument against Christianity it is also an argument against everything.

Such is the attitude usually adopted by the thoughtful Christian of the day towards those who assail him on the ground of these fundamental difficulties. As against the mere objector it is conclusive. It would be well, however, if those who defend religion in this way would imitate the modesty of their great teacher, Bishop Butler. Useful though it be to answer objections, it is not everything. The objector is not as important a person as he seems. There is another person who is infinitely more important, and far harder to deal with: the man who comes to religion for light and cannot get all the illumination he expected. After all, religion will be accepted or rejected by men, not on the ground that it deals successfully or unsuccessfully with all the objections which ingenious minds can bring against it, but because it throws, or fails to throw, light on the great problems which perplex the intelligence, and satisfies, or fails to satisfy, the supreme needs

of human life. Those who believe in Christianity have a right to expect from it a more satisfactory treatment of the great questions than they can get elsewhere.

It must then be admitted as a defect in modern theology that it has not given adequate attention to the greatest problems. It may be, of course, that the time has not yet come for this task. At present theologians are making use of the materials supplied by criticism in order to come into more immediate contact with the primitive facts of historical Christianity. From this more immediate contact they expect, and indeed have already received, a new inspiration. The touch of Christ has given new life. But theology in the strict sense of the term cannot safely be neglected. There is abroad among thinking men of all schools a greater consciousness of the mystery of existence. There is also an increased anxiety for some means by which to come to terms with that mystery. If Christianity is to win and to hold the allegiance of the modern mind, it must be able, if not to solve the great problems, at least to make them endurable.

The foreknowledge of God and the existence

of evil are the two most pressing of these great problems. The former, under the names of predestination and election, provided material for theological controversy to many generations. But the disputations of ages led to nothing but weariness of the whole discussion and despair of ever reaching a conclusion. On the one hand it was found necessary to maintain the all-inclusiveness of Divine knowledge and will. On the other it was impossible to abandon the moral freedom and spiritual self-affirmation of man. But the assertion of the one is implicitly the denial of the other. If the knowledge of God is perfect and the will of God absolutely free, then all things take their rise from the purpose of God, and are determined beforehand; or, adopting the terms of modern philosophy, the universe must be regarded as a perfectly articulated intelligible system leading up to the end which God has in view. Man loses his spiritual endowment. He becomes, in all his activities, merely an instrument in the hands of God. Through him, God works and brings about His eternal designs.

But this doctrine must ever be denied by man's consciousness of his own moral position. He can never consent thus to lose his freedom and moral

dignity. He discerns that with that freedom is bound up the very reality of goodness and evil. The moral command becomes unmeaning, the whole conception of desert falls to the ground, praise and blame are impertinences, if man is not a free agent able to determine himself and to make himself in some degree master of his own destiny. Furthermore, it becomes evident that this endeavour to exalt the Divine at the expense of the human really results in degraded thoughts concerning God. For, in order to credit God with perfect knowledge and absolute will, we are implicitly attributing to Him the authorship of evil, denying to Him the unconstrained love and service of children, and regarding him as a master of slaves, or rather as a possessor and controller of machines.

The truth is, the difficulty involved in the old problem of predestination is precisely the same as that which came to light in the consideration of the relation between free-will and necessity. If full sway be given to the Divine Personality, it swallows up the human. If the rights of the human personality be asserted against the Divine, the latter suffers limitation, it becomes one among many, it ceases to be truly Divine. We

have to choose between a freedom of God which annihilates man and a freedom of man which annihilates God. The only way out of the difficulty is that already indicated: the assumption of a transcendent superpersonal unity as the ultimate truth of the Divine Nature. Final reconciliation of Divine and human personality is, in fact, beyond us. But, assuming that such reconciliation must be ultimately possible, for otherwise the theoretical and practical sides of experience must be at eternal war, its assertion must take the shape of that doctrine which historical Christianity recognises as the corner-stone of its teaching. Or, to put it otherwise, if the two opposing sides in the controversy about predestination are ever to be reconciled, it must be on the basis of a presupposition which is the very kernel of the doctrine of the Trinity.

To reach this position is not to solve the immemorial problem. Rather it is to come to terms with it, to make it, for the present, endurable.

The problem of evil is closely connected with that which we have been considering. Here we find ourselves face to face with the darkest and most tremendous of all enigmas. The only

excuse which can be offered for touching so celebrated a difficulty is that, more distinctly than any other, it drives us back upon the presupposition of Christian theology.

A recent writer, in a long and valuable discussion of this great question, traces much of its difficulty to what he calls "an unwarranted assumption" which has been very commonly made with respect to it. "The question why God permits moral evil," he says, "seems to involve an unproved assumption. It tacitly assumes that a *necessitated* absence of evil must be in itself good, or alone good, so that only impossibility of its ever making its appearance is consistent with the moral ideal of the universe." He goes on to say that "it may turn out after all that the root-question here is: Whether it is morally necessary that the universe in which the Supreme Power is revealed should be a universe of non-moral *things*, to the exclusion of individual *persons*, who, as moral beings, must be able *to make themselves immoral?*"[1] There can be no doubt that here Professor Fraser goes to the root of the matter. A universe of persons is a universe in which evil is

[1] Fraser, *Philosophy of Theism*, vol. ii., pp. 174, 175.

possible. Self-determination is of the essence of personality, and to suppose a universe necessarily good is to suppose the negation of personality. He is therefore right when he asks the question: "Is not express contradiction presented in the supposition of finite *free* agents existing without the possibility of all or any of them doing what ought not to be done"?[1] He is also right in adding that "if so, the assertion that the infinite perfection of God necessitates the persistent sinlessness of responsible persons living in the Divine or perfect universe, would be to assert that irrationality not reason is at the root of all".

But while all this must be granted, does not this way of stating the case conceal the true reason why the unwarranted assumption exposed by Professor Fraser has been made so continually? That reason is surely this: a necessitated absence of evil would secure a universe rationally complete. It would do so at enormous cost; for it would involve the denial of self-determination, and therefore, of true personality to all finite intelligences. But, at this cost, it would secure, what reason demands, the rational

[1] Fraser, *Philosophy of Theism*, vol. ii., p. 178.

integrity of the whole domain of existence. A universe in which evil occurs can never be shown to be perfectly rational.

Much ingenuity has been expended on the discussion of the question of the reality of evil. Is evil real or is it unreal? To the ordinary mind it is positively absurd to hold that evil is unreal. Tell the man who is suffering from some gross act of cruelty or injustice that the evil which has caused his trouble is an unreality, and he will laugh you to scorn. Yet philosophers and theologians always tend to maintain the unreality of evil. The reason is that, searching above all things for rational completeness, they find no other way out of the difficulty created by this great enigma. And yet it may be doubted if even the doctrine of the absolute unreality of evil affords any relief whatever. If evil is an unreality, then the sinfulness of sin is altogether relative to our point of view. It is like the contradictoriness, the unreason, which may be discovered in any subordinate category, such as cause or substance, when it is extricated by abstraction from its place in the logical development of the idea, and given an imaginary independence. The contradiction vanishes when the

category is restored to its place in the whole, and seen in relation to everything else. Sin then is not sinful from the Divine point of view. It is as rational and as righteous as any other finite element in the universe. According to this philosophy, from the highest standpoint, everything is rational throughout, and always has been, and ever will be, if, that is, it is proper to use the language expressive of time-relations in this regard. Or, to put it otherwise, if any existence, of whatever nature or however named, be examined; if its connexions be traced through the whole domain of fact, and through all the forms of thought; it will emerge as an element in a perfectly rational all-inclusive universe which is spiritual throughout, the Life of God. In this great rational whole, evil has its place. It is evil only when viewed from below. It is as rational and righteous as anything else when regarded from above. Or, rather, it is as necessary to the rational completeness of the whole as any other element.

How utterly contrary to Christianity this doctrine is, it is needless to show. The point now is, however, that it affords no real relief from the pressure of the great enigma. If it be true, there

is no reason whatever why evil should be regarded as an evanescent factor in the universe. If its present existence does not take away from the perfect rationality of the Absolute, why should the Absolute ever seek its abolition? Just as the decay which is constantly going on within the body is necessary for the health of the body, so the evil which exists in the world has its place in the constitution of that perfect rational system which forms the Absolute, and there is nothing to show that this state of things is passing away. In fact, on this theory, there is nothing to prove that it may not be in the nature of things inevitable that God should consign all men to the moral degradation and everlasting tortures of hell for the sake of maintaining His own perfect rationality. If at present God's perfect rationality is not inconsistent with the existence of evil, but rather justifies that existence, there is nothing whatever to show that evil will be finally eliminated.[1]

Or, to put the argument in a more theological form, if the existence of evil is not at present inconsistent with the perfection of the Deity,

[1] See McTaggart, *Studies in Hegelian Dialectic*, pp. 181, 182, etc.

but is rather an element in that perfection, why should that existence ever become intolerable to Him?

This objection seems to be fatal to the claims of the Hegelian philosophy to be a completed system. It has been necessary to examine the subject with reference to that philosophy, because in it we find by far the most thorough-going effort ever made to view the universe as a rationally articulated whole. If reason cannot solve the problem of evil by means of that philosophy, there is no use attempting the solution with any other instrument provided by human thought.

The view which we have just examined is sometimes expressed in another way. Evil, we are told, is a lower good. It is good in the making. The virtues of one age are the vices of another. "Murder and lying are a *damnosa hereditas* left us from a time when they were legitimate institutions; when it was honourable to kill all but members of the clan, or to lie without scruple to gain an end."[1] It is by means of evil man rises to a higher good. We have to thank the faults of the past for the

[1] Alexander, *Moral Order and Progress*, p. 307.

advantages and perfections of the present. And the very evils which now strike us as most dreadful will be found to be stepping-stones to higher and better conditions of existence than any which we now enjoy. "O felix culpa!" cried the theologian as he contemplated the fall in the light of redemption. And may not the same exclamation escape from the evolutionist when he considers the share of evil in the process of development?

The criticism which revealed the unsatisfactoriness of the Hegelian doctrine is of course applicable to this theory, which is only that doctrine otherwise expressed. But the statement with which we are now dealing has the advantage of challenging our ordinary moral experience in a more obvious way. The human individual is deprived of his moral value. His moral being is sacrificed for the production of a condition of goodness which does not concern him. But the individual person is the presupposition which makes goodness possible. Goodness to be goodness must be the goodness of character, of self, or of will, or however else the individual person from this point of view may be described. A theory then which makes the

whole series of personal agents to keep on sinning for the purpose of bringing about goodness in an ideal future person who never arrives but is only gradually approximated to in the course of ages, can hardly be said to be in accordance with the demands of the moral consciousness.

Nor is this all. If once the absolute moral worth of the individual be granted, the theory is brought into conflict with plain fact. Evil is not good in the making. For the tendency of evil character is not to cause a reaction towards good in the person who possesses the character. Rather, its tendency is to approximate more and more to fixity and final degradation.

Moral evil is not then to be explained as the imperfection which belongs to a passing stage in development. Such imperfection is due simply to the abstractness of the way in which the stage is regarded. But abstractness of this kind could not account for moral evil, because moral evil is the imperfection of a person, that is, it is the imperfection of the source to which the whole distinction between the abstract and the concrete must be traced.

When we have reached this point of view, we discover the true reason why evil cannot be

unreal. It is because moral evil is a quality of character, or self, and self makes the distinction between reality and unreality. Whatever is unreal must be unreal for self, and therefore must be less concrete than self. But evil properly so called is always an evil self. There is nothing truly good but the good will or self; and there is nothing truly evil but the evil will or self. It is the self-reference of spirit which makes evil to be the dreadfully real thing it is. Hence the self-abasement, the self-loathing, which accompanies the consciousness of sin. The convicted sinner finds that his evil character is inseparable from himself, just because it is himself. He stands self-condemned. "I abhor myself," he cries, "and repent in dust and ashes." But no sincerity of repentance can undo the dreadful fact that the evil has penetrated his inmost being, and that, though the future may bring amendment, it can provide no remedy for the past.

This is the deliverance of the human consciousness on the subject of sin. To its truth the religious experiences of countless generations bear witness. If, in the moment when a man discovers the fact of his sin, he is to be found congratulating himself that the sin is after all, by

means of repentance, the stepping-stone to a higher and better condition than he could have enjoyed without it, it is a sure sign that his repentance is not real. To such a man sin is just so much useful experience. He does better after it, at least so he thinks, because it makes him understand what to do, and what to avoid doing, in order to have a successful life. For him sin is indiscretion, goodness takes no form higher than prudence. While the man is thus minded, repentance, in the true sense of the term, is impossible. True contrition involves self-condemnation, the consciousness of a spiritual condition so hopelessly bad that self can find no remedy.

The helplessness of self is then characteristic of the difficulty in which man finds himself on account of evil. In consequence, if he is to have help in this great need he must, somehow or other, pass beyond self, and find deliverance in a power other and greater than he.

Not merely, however, in this way, but also in the conditions of its very possibility, does evil drive us beyond the individual person. For, as we saw,[1] if the self developed apart from relation to other selves, it would have no means of dis-

[1] See p. 133.

tinguishing between good and evil, the self-evolving sphere would be an image of its life and growth. It is because the man exists as a member of a spiritual universe, and must, therefore, so exert his power of self-determination as to be in harmony or discord with God above him and with other men around him, that the distinction between the good self and the bad self arises. But in this very conception of a universe of spirits we have passed beyond the bounds of a purely rational philosophy. Such a universe is not explicable by reference to the unifying principle of the self.

Hence we see that when the phenomena of evil are frankly considered, when we pass beyond the mere conception of imperfection and attempt to deal with the facts presented by the moral consciousness, we find that the mystery of evil passes into the ultimate mystery with which we have in every case been confronted. Sin is the opposition of the finite spirit to the Infinite, the rebellion of man against God.[1]

[1] St. Augustine traces evil, not to an *efficient* cause, but to a *deficient* cause. "Nemo igitur quaerat efficientem causam malae voluntatis: non enim est efficiens, sed deficiens; quia nec illa effectio, sed defectio. . . . Causas porro defectionum istarum, cum efficientes non sint, ut dixi,

Evil is then a permanent blot upon the rationality of the universe, as we understand rationality. It is, at the same time, a proof of human freedom. Indeed, in the doing of evil, freedom creates a difficulty which would be intolerable but for the consideration that the possibility of goodness involves the possibility of badness, the

sed deficientes, velle invenire, tale est ac si quisquam velit videre tenebras, vel audire silentium" (*De Civitate*, xii., 7).

It is possible to agree in the main with this without accepting the doctrine of the unreality of evil in the sense explained above. All depends on the view of human personality, and consequently of human freedom, which is adopted. The question is: Is evil, when regarded from a higher point of view, seen to be a necessary element in the good, or does it still retain its alien and disorganising character? It is obvious that a *defect* may have this character just as much as an *effect*. Evil as a wilful *defection* from the good may as justly be regarded as the rebellion of the finite spirit against the Infinite, as if the finite were credited with the creation of a rival universe.

The difficulty arises from a confusion of persons and things. It is a mistake to suppose that good and evil are opposites of the same kind as light and darkness, sound and silence, correlatives in which the one term is unmeaning without the other. What is necessary for goodness is, not evil, but the possibility of evil. A perfectly good life implies the absence of sin, but not the absence of temptation. This distinction derives its validity from the fact that goodness and evil belong to wills, that is, to persons: they are not qualities of things.

See Professor Bernard's article "Fall" in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*.

very existence of a state of things in which moral experience is to take place implies the permission of the immoral.

But, though this consideration affords practical relief, it does not solve the problem. From the speculative point of view we have to face the very difficulty which has confronted us all along: How is the perfection of God to be harmonised with man's possession of true personality? If man as a person forms an *imperium in imperio*, if within his own kingdom each man is at liberty to do evil, to create confusion, to assert himself against God, to deny the laws of the great encircling Divine *imperium*, how can God be said to possess any true universal sovereignty, how can He be the all-inclusive Being in whom and for whom exists unbroken harmony? What becomes of the all-pervading Divine reason? What indeed is there to show that man and other finite spirits may not ultimately be given over to evil and the universe become "a universe of devils"?[1]

The truth is, as long as we cling to the view which regards God's unity as simply personal, we are involved in hopeless contradiction. It is the

[1] Fraser, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

same opposition which comes to light in every case. The instance of evil is only more glaring and more impressive than the others. If the opposition is to be overcome, it can be only by an ultimate superpersonal unity. This unity is not to be regarded as irrational, it is rather super-rational, which means that it is rational, and also more than rational. If it is to be called reason, then it is a reason which possesses a principle of unification higher than any known to human reason.

The meaning of this is perhaps more easily approached by help of the subject in hand than in any other way. One of the most splendid and daring attempts ever made to create an optimistic system was the effort of Leibnitz. "Evil," according to him, "belongs not to the actualities of the universe, which are all determined by the Divine Will, but to eternally necessary abstract ideals."[1] These ideals are independent of all will, even the Divine. They are like the principles of mathematics, they cannot be other than they are. The problem of the universe is, in the abstract, like an equation of high power. It admits of many different solutions. In creation Divine will had

[1] See Fraser, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

to give concrete actuality to some one of these. The goodness of God then appears in the fact that, out of all possible universes, he chose to make the best, that whose existence involves the least possible amount of evil. "Had Jupiter," Minerva explains, in the allegory in which Leibnitz develops his theory, "made Sextus Tarquin happy at Corinth, or a good and prosperous king in Thrace, instead of a cruel and licentious tyrant at Rome, the world in which he was found could no longer be *this* world, and must have been less good on the whole than the one in which Sextus actually appeared. So that Jupiter could not but choose this universe, even with its tyrant Sextus; because its ideal surpasses in perfection the ideals of all other possible universes." "You see then," Minerva continues, "that my father has not made Sextus wicked; he was so from all eternity—in the best of eternally necessary ideals. . . . Jupiter has only made him actual instead of ideal; under the perfect ideal from which an evil Tarquin is not excluded, because his exclusion would make it an impossible ideal."[1]

[1] Quoted, or rather, paraphrased by Professor Fraser, *op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 186.

"Vous voyez que mon Père n'a point fait Sextus

But does not this view make God to be, not in Himself the ultimate reason of everything, but subject in the last resort to a law to which He must submit Himself? We here meet the final question: Why are things as they are, and not otherwise? If it were not for the problems which culminate in this enigma of evil, this question would have little meaning for us. Indeed, it may be doubted if it could even be asked. If perfect rational harmony existed throughout the universe, then the whole cosmos of things would be self-explanatory from end to end. The spiritual prin-

méchant, il l'était de toute éternité, il l'était toujours librement, il n'a fait que lui accorder l'existence, que sa sagesse ne pouvait refuser au monde, où il est compris; il l'a fait passer de la région des possibles à celle des êtres actuels."—Leibnitz, *Theodicée* (Amsterdam edition).

Mr. F. Purser points out that Leibnitz does not use the word "ideal" as a substantive, only as an adjective; and that he had in view ideal possibilities as contrasted with actualities, his position being that God actualised the best of the ideal possibilities. This somewhat softens the statement by getting rid of the suggestion, involved in the use of the phrase "abstract ideal," that the monster Sextus belonged to the Divine Ideal of the universe, a suggestion which reverses Leibnitz' meaning.

The argument in the text remains unaltered, because it simply depends upon the fact that Leibnitz had to regard the field of possibility as so limited for the Creator that the best of all possible worlds involved the permission of crimes like that of Sextus.

ciple, always at one with itself, would everywhere find itself, and seek no other explanation. But the opposition of the human spirit to the Divine, that opposition which reaches its climax in the existence of evil, reveals a discord which cannot thus be harmonised. The discord arises from the fact that every spirit finds in itself, and for itself, the ultimate standard of reference. It thus comes into conflict with other spirits and with God, and the conflict thus originating culminates in what we call moral evil.

The only way in which thought has been able to deal with this difficulty is to suppose the supremacy of an abstract law of some kind, a law to which even the Infinite Spirit, which gives actuality to nature, is subject. This is the essence of Leibnitz' solution. Evil results because God cannot overrule certain great abstract principles. He must create, if He create at all, subject to the limitations imposed by them.

Even in our ordinary religious thought we reason in precisely the same way. We speak of conscience as "the voice of God". But if we are asked what we mean by this, we find ourselves in a difficulty. Do we mean that God makes right to be right, and wrong to be wrong, by mere

decree? Are the moral commands created by the mere arbitrary fiat of the Deity? Are they founded, not on some ultimate *reason*, but on *will* acting capriciously? The moment this choice is presented to us, we prefer reason to will. We say the law springs from the very nature of God Himself. Goodness is His nature, therefore He wills the good. That is, we exalt the law above the Deity, the abstract above the concrete. But, when we have done so, have we approached any nearer to the solution of our difficulty? If we consider this question in the way suggested by Leibnitz, we are led to the following dilemma. The abstract ideals limit the Absolute, either because they are the expression of His own reason, or because they form a superior order to which He is forced to submit. We naturally prefer the former alternative. The Absolute, we say, is limited in His action because He must maintain His own consistency, He must act in accordance with His own reason. To contradict Himself would be irrational. In doing so, He would fall from His perfection. But if these "necessary ideals," these principles of Divine reason, involve, even under the best of all possible conditions, the existence

of evil, even as a means to good, then they involve an element which cannot be rationalised. Thus the nature of God is discovered to be, at the best, only partially rational. The other alternative, which supposes the Absolute to be subject to laws which are superior to His own nature, is of course self-contradictory, for then He is no more the Absolute. He has become a mere demiurge, and all the difficulties of the situation have to be considered once more with reference to the true Absolute.

The meaning of this difficulty will be more clearly revealed if we return to the ethical illustration used a short time ago. Why, let us ask, do we object to the doctrine which makes morality to depend on the arbitrary decree of God? It is surely because that doctrine regards the Deity as one Person among many. It seems to make one will legislate for all the rest. Moral law seems to be imposed by *will*, by something which is personal and private to one Being. It seems to lose its true universality, its objectivity. We prefer to attribute moral law to ultimate reason, because that is an appeal to something which is the same in all persons, which is strictly impersonal. But, when we

have done so, we do not see that we have merely succeeded in exalting the abstract above the concrete. Yet, as every student of philosophy ought now to be fully aware, explanation, if it is to have any philosophical value, must proceed from the abstract to the concrete.

The fact is, we find ourselves once more face to face with the very dilemma which we have encountered in the case of every other great human problem. If God is merely personal He is one among many, He is no true Absolute. If, in the effort to reach complete universality, we exalt Him above ourselves as supreme reason, we only succeed in treating Him as an abstraction. We indeed exalt ourselves above Him by this means, for while He has become an abstraction, we remain the concrete to which that abstraction owes its existence.

The only way out of the difficulty is to assume the existence of a superpersonal unity in the Deity, by virtue of which all the discords which belong to our imperfect position find their resolution in one universal harmony. Or, to put it otherwise, if in the face of the mysteries which culminate in the enigma of evil, we are to escape from a doctrine of universal nescience and

despair, it must be by falling back upon a presupposition which in its essence is identical with the central dogma of Christianity.

It is perhaps necessary to affirm here once again that in this treatment of the question no pretence is made that a solution of the difficulty has been reached. To solve the difficulty would be to succeed in rationalising evil. And this has not been accomplished. The point here is that evil cannot be rationalised. It is an opposition which reason, as we possess it, cannot overcome. But we cannot admit that this dualism must persist for God. We must believe—it is the faith which underlies everything—that there is in God a final concrete unity. Apart from such final unity there can be no coherence anywhere. Science, conduct, thought and life, all depend upon it ultimately. If it fails, there follows universal disintegration.

God then is finally One. But His unity is, on account of this, for us, persistent dualism, a superpersonal unity, a unity which human thought, though it must presuppose it, cannot hope to understand. In other words, the ultimate Divine unity is transcendent. We have, therefore, reached, not a solution of the problem

of evil, but a faith which prevents the awfulness of that problem from being overwhelming.

The intellectual need which forces us to consider the problem of evil theoretically, corresponds to a practical need of a far more imperative kind: the need of atonement. The two great spiritual needs of man are, to know God and to be at one with Him. The one cries: "O that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even to His seat!"[1] The other: "Now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes".[2] The consciousness of sin intervenes between the need and its satisfaction. Unity with God is the highest blessing man can seek, but evil interposes itself as a barrier which human ability cannot cross. And so there ascends the cry for mercy: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving-kindness. According to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. . . . Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done evil in Thy sight." . . . "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." . . . "Cast me not

[1] Job xxiii. 3. [2] *Ibid.*, xlii. 6.

away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me."

How profoundly such words as these express human need, all religious experience bears witness. The cry for atonement is the most urgent cry which has ever ascended from earth to heaven. The history of the ideas and practices which have been connected with the need of atonement would be a history of religion. Man craves for unity, peace, with the Supreme power above him, however he may conceive that power. In our own day, the type of religion which reaches the hearts of men most effectually is that which, in various ways, presents Christianity as a religion of atonement, a religion which reveals the overcoming of evil by Divine love and power.

It has often been pointed out that it is necessary to distinguish between the fact of the Atonement and the doctrine, or explanation, of the fact. The Christian religion purports to be, in one of its principal aspects, a revelation of the fact. But the mind finds it hard to rest satisfied with the fact. It demands a doctrine. In the attempt to satisfy this demand, endless difficulties have arisen. In part, these difficulties can be accounted for on the principle that much

which has been put forth as explanation is, in truth, merely various and impressive representation of the fact as it is revealed in Holy Scripture.

In general, theories of the Atonement can be divided into two classes: those which make it consist in the revelation of a deeper truth, and those which see in it an actual overcoming of evil. The most characteristic instance of the former is the view that the life and death of Christ yield so splendid a revelation of the Divine character that the terrors of the sinner, which spring simply from his low estimate of Divine love, are overcome, and he is able to rise to a loftier point of view and to realise that God is, all the time, in spite of sin, his best friend. In order to counteract the antinomian tendency of this doctrine, it is generally supplemented by a statement that the sufferings and death of Christ are an exhibition of the judgment of God upon sin, so that the sinner is convinced by one and the same fact of God's hatred of sin and His love of the sinner. But love so overpowers judgment that the fact becomes a spring of new life to the believing soul. The cry "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," is silenced, and the assur-

ance, "Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee," expresses the ruling principle of the life.

However touching this view may be it is impossible to be satisfied with it. It corresponds exactly to the Hegelian view of sin. Its essence is an implicit denial of the reality of evil. And even if that denial were admitted, as we have seen, it would avail nothing as a solution of the problem. Just as the Hegelian doctrine fails to explain the existence of evil, so this doctrine of the Atonement fails to justify forgiveness. Evil has been passed over, but it remains exactly where it was, in all its original deformity. It has not been destroyed. A man may have spent his earlier years in vice which has ruined his body, impaired his mental faculties, debased his character, inflicted permanent injury upon the characters of others. He may have set in motion evil forces which will exert a baneful influence on many generations. Yet in his old age he is forgiven, that is, he has obtained by means of the death of Christ so clear a view of God's hatred of sin and love to the sinner that he feels a horror of his own sinful past and gains power to lead a better life for the rest of

his time. But, however valuable such spiritual experience may be, it is not easy to see that the evil of the man's life has been dealt with in any adequate manner. After all, is it not clear that an eternity of goodness cannot undo the sin of the past? That sin remains as a permanent blot on the life and a permanent injury inflicted on mankind.

There can be no doubt that theories of the Atonement which aim at showing that in the death of Christ sin was actually overcome and destroyed, make a much more real effort to grapple with the needs of the case. Many passages of Scripture seem to point in this direction. "Who His own self bare our sins in His own Body on the Tree." "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil." These expressions seem to indicate a doctrine of real objective atonement. They seem to teach that the work of Christ is not simply an appeal to the hearts and consciences of men, not merely the revelation of a higher kind of thought concerning God, but a real means of undoing evil. Christ did away with the evil

which stood between God and man. He overcame sin. This conception of atonement corresponds to the facts of human life and the needs of human nature, and has therefore always made a more potent appeal to the heart than any other. But of course the question arises: How did Christ overcome sin, How did He do away with evil? And it cannot be pretended that any of the answers which have been made to this question are satisfactory.

The reason is now obvious. To understand the Atonement it would be first of all necessary to solve the problem of evil. It is not easy to see how the nature and operation of the remedy can be understood while the disease remains a mystery. Atonement, if there is such a thing at all, is God's dealing with the problem of evil. But that problem is, as we have seen, transcendent. The Atonement must, then, be for us a transcendent problem, one which we can never hope to solve while our faculties remain what they are. But the Atonement as a fact we must accept, if we have any measure of Christian faith; and, as regards the theory of it, we can at least go this far, if our reasoning has been at all sound, the work of Christ for man must have been a real

overcoming of evil, a real destroying of sin, a real dealing with the dark mystery which seems, from our human point of view, to form an insuperable obstacle to union with God.

We are now able to understand why this question of the Atonement was so necessary and yet so puzzling to human thought. It was necessary because the Atonement is the means of satisfying our greatest spiritual need. It was puzzling, because the final solution must, from the very nature of the problem with which it deals, be transcendent. The difficulty of grasping the Atonement intellectually is precisely the difficulty which has faced us all through, and the only way of coming to terms with it is on the basis of that presupposition to which every great fundamental difficulty in thought and life leads us back.

The necessity of this emerges more distinctly if we consider that in claiming desert, as in sin, man acts independently, asserts himself against God as a person possessed of free self-determination in relation to another person in the same position. In each case he adopts the attitude of one who has rights of his own as against God. He treats God as one person

among many. On this plane atonement is impossible. Forgiveness is conceivable. But it is like the forgiveness which one man can bestow upon another. It is no real remedy for the disease of sin. It cannot undo the evil already done. What is required for atonement is the creation of a harmony in which the opposition of person to person, whether it be the opposition of sin or the opposition of desert, is completely overcome, and by means of which man finds himself utterly dependent upon God and in perfect accord with Him.[1] For man such a harmony can only be attained by an act of faith. To attain it so is, in Pauline language, to be justified by faith. But, for God, this atonement must, if human faith is to be well founded, be a truth belonging to the very highest order of being. It must be *most* real, a fact of the life of God. However mystical such language may seem it is after all nothing but the basal assumption on which we have been in every case driven back, the assumption of superpersonal unity as the ultimate truth of the Divine Nature.

It is worth noting that the view which has been

[1] See Canon Gore in *Guardian* for 23rd March, 1898, p. 453.

put forward here and which regards the Atonement as God's dealing with the problem of evil is in agreement with the statements of St. Paul. In the epistle to the Romans, having given a dreadful description of the evil of the world, both Jewish and Gentile, the apostle distinctly admits that, though all this evil took place through the will of man, yet it was also in a sense by the permission of God. Or, in other words, God gave man free-will and allowed him to use it for evil as well as for good. He did not interfere to prevent the evil.[1] He allowed man to act as a morally responsible being. But though God acted with forbearance towards man, in order to give man his opportunity as a moral being, yet He could not suffer the evil to continue. As the evil happened by His permission He could not preserve His own righteousness if He did not interfere to undo the mischief. And so we are told that sinners are "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, by His blood, to show His righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbear-

[1] Rom. i. 28.

ance of God; for the showing, I say, of His righteousness at this present season: that He might Himself be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus".[1] It was the passing over of sin by God, that is, His permission of evil, which made the Atonement necessary. God had to display[2] His own righteousness and to make men righteous. The dreadful fact of evil had to be dealt with. Otherwise God's righteousness would have been imperfect and men would have remained in sin. How could an evil world be the work of a holy God? Yet if God asserts His holiness against the world He dooms mankind. It is God as person against man as person. On this plane, the plane on which the universe seems a collection of persons among whom God is supreme, move and interact a number of conceptions and relations by means of which we can never solve the problem. Such are law and works in the teaching of St. Paul. Only by rising to a higher plane, a rise which can be made by man by an act of faith only, do

[1] Rom. iii. 24-26, R. V.

[2] Surely this showing (ἔνδειξις) does not mean a mere exhibition of penal suffering. How could such suffering inflicted on the innocent prove God's righteousness? There must be a deeper truth. See Gore, *loc. cit.*

we reach the truth that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself," overcoming, that is, all those oppositions which culminate in sin and creating universal harmony.

LECTURE VI.

THE ULTIMATE UNITY.

"God is Love" (1 John iv. 16).

THERE is a well-known argument that if God is love, His unity cannot be the unity of a single person; for love is essentially a relation between persons: it demands plurality. If we regard God as simply one great person, we have to think of Him as waiting until the whole process of creation has been accomplished, before His love can find an object on which to bestow itself. His love belongs in that case, not to His inmost essence, but to His relation to some of His creatures; and the splendid sentence of St. John, God is Love, becomes a rhetorical exaggeration, rather than an expression of the truth about the Divine Nature.

This is an effective argument, because it is easily understood; and it seems to be as sound as it is effective. It has, however, the defect of leading unintentionally to a doctrine which has

always been condemned as heretical. It seems to result inevitably in Tritheism. If we think of the Deity as a group of persons united by love, we have a conception which, for ordinary minds, is almost polytheistic.

The view which has been taken in these lectures may seem open to the same objection. We have adopted the word *person*, apparently without qualification, in the sense in which it is applied to human beings. For us, the multiplicity of the Divine Nature is personal, the unity is superpersonal. But, as this superpersonal unity is above thought, we appear to have nothing really clear to our minds except a group of Divine Persons who are at one because they act in perfect harmony. This is all we seem to gather from lecture iv. The contingent and the necessary elements in nature are seen to contribute harmoniously to the orderly succession of events, so that the history of nature becomes, through their co-operation, a true evolution, a regular progress to an end. Here we discern a unity of purpose which corresponds exactly to the love between persons of the old view which we have just mentioned.

This is a matter of the utmost consequence, for

if we have reached only a polytheistic conception our labour has been in vain, we have but reduced to an absurdity the whole scheme of our thought.

The Augustinian way of approaching the speculative treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity avoids this difficulty. It begins from the unity of man's spiritual being, and finds in that unity a trinity which it takes to be a representation of the Divine Nature. Man was made in the image of God, and, therefore, man may be expected to exhibit, in some manner or degree, the triune nature of God. St. Augustine works out this conception in different ways. The mind dealing with itself is a trinity, memory, intelligence, love (or will).[1] The mind "remembers itself, understands itself, loves itself".[2] Here is the triune principle, not indeed as it exists in God, but as an image of God.

The very nature of love too, according to Augustine, presents an image of the Trinity. "Love is of some one that loves, and with love something is loved. Behold then, there are three

[1] *De Trin.*, bk. xiv., c. vi., § 8.

[2] *Ibid.*, c. viii., § 11. "Ecce ergo mens meminit sui, intelligit se, diligit se: hoc si cernimus, cernimus trinitatem, nondum quidem Deum, sed jam imaginem Dei."

things: he that loves, and that which is loved, and love. What then is love, except a certain life which couples or seeks to couple together some two things, namely, him that loves, and that which is loved?"[1] But Augustine does not press this conception. He hesitates to compare the Divine Three to a group of human persons. He prefers to dwell upon the trinity which exists within the consciousness of the individual man. By so doing, he holds fast to the unity. The unity of the mind within which the trinity exists represents the unity of the Godhead.

The argument of St. Augustine has had a great influence upon modern theology. Nor is this surprising, for modern philosophy finds a trinity in the very nature of the movement of the thought-process. It is impossible to read the *De Trinitate* of the great philosophical theologian of the fourth and fifth centuries without finding a parallel in the fundamental thought of Hegel's *Philosophy of Religion.* The mind which knows itself and loves itself is intrinsically the same as

[1] "Amor autem alicujus amantis est, et amore aliquid amatur. Ecce tria sunt, amans, et quod amatur, et amor. Quid est ergo amor, nisi quædam vita duo aliqua copulans, vel copulare appetens, amantem scilicet et quod amatur?" (*De Trin.*, bk. viii., c. x., § 14, Eng. trans. by Haddan).

the thesis, antithesis and synthesis of the Dialectic. For Hegel the Divine Trinity is discerned in the moments of "that eternal movement which is God Himself". "God *is*, but is at the same time the Other, the self-differentiating, the Other in the sense that this Other is God Himself and has potentially the Divine Nature in it, and that the abolishing of this difference, of this otherness, this return, this love, is spirit".[1]

The most interesting recent expression of this way of approaching the subject is contained in Mr. Illingworth's *Personality, Human and Divine.* "Our own personality is triune; but it is a potential, unrealised trinity, which is incomplete in itself, and must go beyond itself for completion, as, for example, in the family. If, therefore, we are to think of God as personal, it must be by what is called the method of eminence (*via eminentiae*)—the method, that is, which considers God as possessing, in transcendent perfection, the same attributes which are imperfectly possessed by man. He must, therefore, be pictured as One whose Trinity has nothing potential

[1] Hegel, *Philosophy of Religion*, Eng. trans., vol. iii., pp. 99, 100. See also vol. iii., pp. 19, 33 (Spiers & Sanderson).

or unrealised about it; whose triune elements are eternally actualised, by no outward influence, but from within; a Trinity in Unity; a social God, with all the conditions of personal existence internal to Himself."[1]

The great difficulty of this whole line of thought was discerned by Augustine. At the end of the *De Trinitate* he dwells with emphasis on the unlikeness between the image of the Trinity which we find in ourselves and the Trinity itself. "These three things, memory, understanding and love, are Mine, not their own; neither do they do that which they do for themselves, but for Me, or rather I do it by them. For it is I who remember by memory, and understand by understanding, and love by love."[2] "It is I that remember, I that understand, I that love, who am neither memory nor understanding, nor love, but who have them. These things, then, can be said by a single person, which has these three, but is not these three. But in the simplicity of that Highest

[1] Pp. 73, 74.

[2] "Tria ista, memoria, intellectus et amor mea sunt, non sua; nec sibi, sed mihi agunt quod agunt, imo ego per illa. Ego enim memini per memoriam, intelligo per intelligentiam, amo per amorem" (*De Trin.*, bk. xv., c. xxii., § 42).

Nature, which is God, although there is one God, there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." [1]

It would be impossible to state more frankly the criticism which the main thought of his book inevitably suggests. All modes of representing the Divine Trinity which depend upon an analysis of human consciousness, and which compare the three Divine Persons to three faculties of the mind or to three stages or moments in self-consciousness, lead to Sabellianism, unless corrected by considerations derived from revelation or from traditional beliefs. The reason is obvious. In every examination of the modes or content of consciousness, the self or person remains as the final unity. It is impossible to find three persons in consciousness, only three modes of the one person's activity. It is for this reason doubtless that Augustine is so clear as to the meaning he attaches to the word *persona*. While in a manner

[1] "Ego per omnia illa tria memini, ego intelligo, ego diligo, qui nec memoria sum, nec intelligentia, nec dilectio, sed haec habeo. Ista ergo dici possunt ab una persona, quae habet haec tria, non ipsa est haec tria. In illius vero summae simplicitate naturae, quae Deus est, quamvis unus sit Deus, tres tamen personae sunt, Pater et Filius et Spiritus sanctus" (*Ibid.*).

apologising for the theological use of that word,[1] he assigns to it a meaning which is unmistakable. For him it is, most distinctly, not a mere phase or representation. He defines it by the word *ipse*.[2] Personality is selfness. This is the conclusion in his formal discussion of the question. And in the passage already quoted the "I" in man is regarded as his person, and the Divine Three are regarded as three persons in the sense that each is, for himself, a distinct ego.

The theology of Augustine is by this means saved, as he himself clearly realised, from the suspicion of Sabellianism.[3] But it is not at all clear that the saving clause does not deprive the main argument of the greater part of its value.

It will be found, however, that the true value of the Augustinian conception consists in the fact

[1] "Dictum est tamen tres personae, non ut illud diceretur, sed ne taceretur" (*De Trin.*, bk. v., c. ix., § 10).

[2] ". . . neque in hac Trinitate cum dicimus personam Patris, aliud dicimus quam substantiam Patris. Quocirca ut substantia Patris ipse Pater est, non quo Pater est, sed quo est; ita et persona Patris, non aliud quam ipse Pater est: ad se quippe dicitur persona, non ad Filium vel Spiritum Sanctum" (*De Trin.*, bk. vii., c. vi., § 11).

[3] *De Trin.*, bk. vii., c. 4, § 9.

that it affords, not an adequate theory of the Divine Nature, but a representation of Divine things in terms of human things. It possesses, therefore, a relative truth. In the words of Mr. Illingworth, "our own personality points" to the mystery of the Divine Nature. How this comes about we have still to inquire.

We can now understand how the two opposite views of Tritheism and Sabellianism arise, and how they seek to justify themselves. The one thinks of a group of persons united by love and unity of purpose. The other of a great Person possessed of varied activities, and therefore manifesting Himself in ways which can be paralleled by the separate exercise of the faculties which belong to a human person. In this case surely, as in all cases of intellectual conflict, a more adequate doctrine will emerge as soon as we can rise to a higher point of view, and so include the truth and reject the falsehood of both extremes.

It is not surprising, however, to find that modern Christian opinion swings incessantly between these two opposite poles. At one time it is tritheistic, at another it is Sabellian. It is never certain as to the sense in which it is to

employ the word *person*. Modern Sabellians openly or covertly find help in the original meaning of the Latin word *persona*. Modern tritheists are considerably influenced, often without full recognition of the fact, by the meaning which modern thought has attached to the word *personality*. Careful theologians attempt to discover a middle way. They strive to find a meaning for the word which will save it from the defect of the one extreme and the seeming excess of the other. They show easily that *persona* was but a poor substitute for the Greek ὑπόστασις, and that modern philosophy has given to human personality a fulness and definiteness of meaning unknown to antiquity.

But in thus guarding against both extremes, the careful theologian is in danger of depriving the doctrine of Divine personality of all intelligible signification. If the Persons in the Trinity are neither persons in the sense in which that term is used of human creatures, nor modes or manifestations of the One Being, we are landed in the unmeaning.

But while it is easy to show that the word *persona* conveys more to us than it did to Augustine, and conveyed more to Augustine than to

Tertullian,[1] let it not be forgotten that in exploring his own nature man is learning to know God. If the experience and the reflection of many centuries have enabled man to think more deeply and accurately concerning himself, a greater definiteness of meaning must come to be attached to the terms which are used to express that thought, and the application of these terms to theological purposes must result in deeper thoughts concerning God. The result must be that, while the formulæ of theology remain unchanged, their meaning grows. The formulæ endure, because the historical facts which gave them birth are unalterable. Here is the principle which runs through the whole series of changes, and gives them their connexion. In all ages, to take the example which is most in point, the student of Scripture must have thought of the Son of God as a Person. It was at all times impossible to read the story of the life of Jesus of Nazareth without believing in His distinct personality, however the philosophy of the time may have defined that word.

[1] See Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. iv., p. 121, note (Eng. translation). The word ὑπόστασις was, for a long time, used in a very variable and indefinite way by the Greek theologians (*op. cit.*, vol. iv., c. 1).

The same principles apply, more or less, to all theological conceptions. The Fatherhood of God means more to us than it meant to the earlier generations of Christians, just because the general conception of fatherhood has acquired a deeper meaning. To modern minds the thought of a father's love suggests an affection of a far tenderer kind than the same thought could have suggested in ancient times. It would be strange if this were not so, after the experiences of so many Christian centuries.

We need not then be ashamed to look to the deeper and more definite modern view of personality for help in the endeavour to shape our conception of the Divine Nature. If Christian theology be true, it must be in vital connexion with human thought, and therefore must find in the fundamental categories, those which are most profoundly involved in the life of the ages, its fitting embodiment.

The position which we have been led to adopt is in accordance with this principle. When we speak of Divine Persons, we use the term person in the sense in which it is used of human beings. In man, personality is the name given to self-hood. The man is a person, because he is the self-con-

scious subject of an experience, because he refers to himself as "I". And it is in this sense that personality is predicated of each of the Divine Three. With this definition the plain sense of Holy Scripture is in agreement, for did not Christ say, "I and the Father are One"; and with implicit acceptance of this position every Christian speaks of each of the Three as "He," "Who," "Thou," terms which impute personal self-reference to the subject of whom, or to whom, they are spoken.

It being granted then that the Divine Persons are persons in the sense in which human beings are persons, the question becomes urgent; how are we to reply to the charge of tritheism? How are we to show that self-consciousness as it exists in each of the Divine Three does not involve that separation of person from person which belongs to the conscious life of human beings?

The answer to this question has already been given more than once, and has been implied all through, nevertheless it is possible that it is not yet as clear as it is desirable to make it.

We saw in lecture ii. that the existence of a multitude of persons implies the existence of a principle of unity higher than personality, a unity in which all spirits have their home and

bond of union. This is the ultimate unity of the universe, the final truth. Because it must be regarded as a principle which overcomes the multiplicity of the world of spirits and makes all to be one, it is superpersonal. For this reason human thought, for which personality is always the highest category, cannot fully grasp it, and must only assume its existence as the ultimate presupposition without which the universe would not be a universe. We have here an appeal made in faith to the ultimate principle of all explanation, the principle of unity. But it may be said: Is not this a contradiction? We first deny the applicability of human thought and then we proceed to apply it. The answer is, we apply it having first recognised its insufficiency. We clearly realise that it is not adequate. It is the best we can do, but the object which we thus try to grasp cannot in its fulness be contained within the categories of human reason.

We may use as an illustration of this position Kant's *Ideas of the Reason*. In his critical philosophy Kant undertook to show that the categories of the understanding are not able to deal with anything but the phenomena of experience. He had, however, to postulate, as necessary pre-

suppositions of Reason in its speculative use, certain great regulative ideas, the soul, the world and God. These ideas attain true objective validity only in the moral sphere. Speculatively, though necessary as regulative principles, their objectification leads to fallacy. In the sphere of practice, they are of fundamental importance.

So here, human intelligence finds itself face to face with a region which it cannot subdue, the multitude of persons. Its only refuge from utter despair is to assume boldly, by a great act of faith, that there is in God an ultimate super-personal unity in which all persons are one. From this point of view, God as ultimate unity is the great regulative idea which keeps all our thoughts from disintegration, and which becomes, in the sphere of practice, the basis of our whole moral and spiritual life.

It is impossible, however, to adopt this position without meeting and considering the Hegelian criticism. According to this, Kant erred through not recognising that the principle of intelligence is essentially universal. Kant saw that intelligence is supreme among the phenomena of experience, because according to him intelligence makes these phenomena. He did not see that

intelligence must be equally supreme everywhere, because he did not see that intelligence must be itself intelligible. It is impossible, according to Hegel, to set any limit to intelligence, because in the very act of setting a limit thought has already leaped across it. Thought cannot grasp it as a limit unless it has already passed it. The grasp of thought is, therefore, universal.[1] So when man thinks himself as an individual he includes himself as an element in a larger system and *ipso facto* has risen to the point of view for which that larger system exists. So also when man thinks a multitude of individuals he rises to the universal point of view and sees all in one. By virtue of his reason, as this higher use of intelligence must be called, man is then in possession of the means by which to penetrate the arcanum of truth and to master its most sublime mystery, the concrete universal.

However fascinating such a line of reflection may be we ought by this time to be able to detect

[1] This principle is used with great power, both for critical and constructive purposes, by the late Principal J. Caird; but his application of it to the problem now under discussion can scarcely be said to touch the main difficulty. See his *Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*, chap. v., and the author's *Short Study of Ethics*, part i., app. i., § 3.

the imperfection of the argument. That imperfection is surely a confusion of abstract with concrete universality. As a person man possesses his own experience as a concrete system. Every element in that experience, whether it be sensation or thought, takes its place in a whole which exists just because it exists for him. The self includes the whole panorama. Here the man is the centre. As regards his own experience his position is one of concrete universality. Quite different is his position as regards other persons. In a sense he can think them, but he does so only by means of abstraction. He takes elements in *his own* experience and makes them signs of elements which he assumes to exist in the experience of others. He attributes to others feelings and modes of mental combination similar to those which he himself possesses. These feelings and modes of thought are abstractions from the totality of his own experience. By means of them he reaches an abstract universality which includes the multitude of persons. But this universality is merely abstract, for the real content of the mind of another remains inaccessible. It cannot be included in the content of the mind of the thinker. Strictly speaking he can neither

feel the feelings nor think the thoughts of another. Only by a venture of faith can he be certain that the feelings and thoughts which he attributes to another are even like the reality.

True it is, indeed, that this faith finds a perpetual verification in experience. Practically, it is amply justified. But this very fact only shows how different is the knowledge which a person possesses of the contents of another mind from his knowledge of the contents of his own. Instead of being able to pass the barrier which divides him from the experience of another, that barrier is so insuperable that, neither in feeling nor in thought, can he get to the other side of it. Even when verification has done its utmost, the most that can be said with strict accuracy is, that the abstract laws, according to which all persons construct their separate worlds of experience, are the same, or at least, form parts of the same intelligible system. Upon this sameness depends the trustworthiness of our ordinary judgments of matters of fact and of science. It is because the same system of construction pervades all experiences that those experiences correspond sufficiently for our judgments to have validity, not merely for the man who pronounces them, but

for all. Thus it happens that what is true for one is true for all. But this is an abstract universality. Neither feeling nor thought enables us to enter into the experience of another as that experience exists for him. So utterly true is this, that if any one likes to maintain that no person but himself exists, disproof is impossible.

Hegel felt this difficulty. His thought constantly hovers round it, but never fairly grapples with it. In the passage which is perhaps the clearest of all, he declares that when we are dealing with personality "contradiction seems to be pushed so far as to be incapable of any solution". But that "it is the nature or character of what we mean by person or subject to abolish its isolation or separateness". But when we eagerly seek for further guidance as to how this happens, we are merely referred to our moral experience. "Morality, love, just mean the giving up of particularity, or of the particular personality, and its extension to universality, and so, too, is it with the family and friendship, for there you have the identity of the one with the other. Inasmuch as I act rightly towards another, I consider him as identical with myself. In friendship and love I give up my abstract personality and in this way

win it back as concrete personality. It is just this winning back of personality by the act of absorption, by the being absorbed into the other, which constitutes the true nature of personality."[1]

There could not be a clearer proof of the impossibility of overcoming the opposition between person and person by means of thought. When confronted with this difficulty, Hegel has to abandon thought and appeal to morality and love. Of course, morality demands the unification of persons. So does love, from its very nature. But this demand is one which the speculative reason cannot satisfy. Morality and love have to believe where they cannot prove. That is, they have to appeal to a superrational (or superpersonal) unity, because the unity of mere reason fails them.

It is interesting to note how Hegel brings in, to help him, "the true nature of personality". That nature consists in "the abolishing of its isolation," "the being absorbed into the other". These expressions describe the essential characteristic of self-consciousness, namely, the opposition of self and not-self, and that opposition

[1] Hegel, *Philosophy of Religion*, Eng. translation, vol. iii., pp. 24, 25.

overcome by self, self as the "crystal sphere" which holds apart, and yet reconciles, the two elements, self and not-self. This is the characteristic which makes the having of experience possible, and shows that the ego is the ground of all experience. But Hegel here applies this principle, without explanation or justification, to an opposition which is very different from the ordinary opposition of self and not-self. He uses it to overcome the opposition of self and other-self. But other-self, in its true character, eludes the grasp of self. It cannot be included within the bounds of thought, either for opposition or for reconciliation. As other-self it remains outside, and for self, is strictly an object of faith, not of knowledge.

It is not correct then to say that man can rise to a position of true universality, as regards the multitude of persons. Such universality would be concrete. It would involve the attainment of a point of view which would command all selves from within: all experiences—all panoramas—would be seen to take their place in one universal concrete, and yet rational, system. But this is a view of the world which human thought cannot obtain. If it could, it would have resolved all

the antinomies which have been passed in review in these lectures. All these antinomies consist in oppositions between persons. The problem of problems is to harmonise the claims of the whole multitude of personal agents and reach a unity in which all their mutual oppositions are overcome. If such a unity were truly reached, the problem of epistemology would be solved, the puzzle of free-will would be explained, the mystery of evil would no more perplex. When this is understood, how vain becomes the claim of the Hegelian philosophy to have attained to the true concrete idea, and seen all things in one.

According to Hegel the presence of antinomy is merely a mark that thought is engaged in performing its proper and legitimate function. "Every actual thing involves a coexistence of opposed elements. Consequently to know, or, in other words, to comprehend an object is equivalent to being conscious of it as a concrete unity of opposed determinations."[1] This is entirely true while attention is confined to the things which occur within the experience of the individual. And Hegel's criticism of Kant gains

[1] Hegel, *Logic*, § 48, Wallace's translation. See §§ 45, 60, especially 60.

enormously in plausibility because it deals with the general question of antinomy under the head of the second object of the reason, *viz.*, the world. Here the thing, the perceived object, the ordinary element in the experience of the individual thinker, lies close at hand, conveniently placed for continual mental reference. And this thing is indeed a "concrete unity of opposed determinations". It is a mass of antinomies which thought has overcome and reconciled. Examine it critically and it will be found to consist of elements which exist only as they are related, that is, only as they limit and oppose one another; and the bond which overcomes all these oppositions and holding all together, gives unity to the whole, is the knowing self.

But such antinomies are very different from those which depend upon the separate operations of different selves. Here reason, intelligence (*i.e.*, the self), loses its unifying power. It has reached its limit just because it must assume the existence of an opposite which does not enter consciousness. Another self lies altogether outside its panorama. To that other it can attribute, as we have seen, abstract methods of combination derived from its own panorama, but

it cannot combine separate subjectivities into one system. It cannot rise, as regards the world of persons, to the position of concrete universality.

It is all very well for Hegel to show that Kant stopped short at the negative point of view, and that he did not see that in apprehending an opposition the mind has already implicitly overcome the opposition. As against Kant, this argument is, in part at all events, perfectly sound. But it does not touch the position which we have adopted, just because Hegel did not distinguish antinomies which take place within the system of the individual's thought from those which arise from the impossibility of that system, including the subjectivity of another self. The vagueness which characterises certain fundamental parts of Hegel's philosophy, and which indeed constitutes its principal difficulty, seems to be due in the main to the fact that he did not really face this great question. He argued round it. He took refuge in abstractions which he affirmed to be concrete. He incessantly changed his point of view from the human to the Divine, and from the Divine to the human.[1] He treated spirit or thought as if it were impersonal, while every

[1] A. Seth, *Hegelianism and Personality*, p. 156.

step of his argument depends upon the principle of self-consciousness, which is the essence of personality. The total result is that the study of Hegel's philosophy is like viewing the world from a misty mountain top. Here and there, through rents in the floating vapour, are seen vast distances lit up by a splendour so brilliant that every feature of the landscape seems clear to the very horizon. But when the eye sweeps round to enjoy the whole panorama it encounters cloudy masses through which loom great forms which, however impressive to the imagination, are merely baffling to the intelligence.

We may then describe the philosophical position we have reached as Hegelian up to a certain point and beyond that Kantian. The point at which we have been forced to fall back upon Kantian methods is where the effort is made to step out beyond the individual self and reach a unity able to overcome and reconcile the conflicting claims of the multitude of persons. Here it is impossible to attain a real synthesis. But we cannot end with a disconnected and warring multiplicity. We cannot leave all the threads hanging loose. If we did, the whole system would unravel. If we cannot complete the pattern,

we must, for speculative as well as practical reasons, knot the threads and save our labour from destruction. And this can be done in but one way; by applying to the problem the principle of intelligence, the principle of unity. Such a use of intelligence corresponds to what Kant termed Reason. It supplies a principle which must be presupposed, an idea which, for regulative purposes, must be assumed. For us, there is just one such idea, a superpersonal unity in which all persons find their home and harmonisation.

This statement will perhaps be found useful as a means of approaching the point of view which is here presented. But it is not sufficient. The ultimate superpersonal unity is not a mere regulative principle. It is far more. How much more has been already indicated, but is not yet perhaps sufficiently clear.

There is a conception which is now attracting considerable attention among students of philosophy and which deserves even more attention than it has yet received. Due to Hegel, it has been emphasised especially by two of the most competent of recent philosophical writers, Mr. Bradley[1] and Professor Seth. It is the conception of *degrees*

[1] *Appearance and Reality*, ch. xxiv.

of reality. The more abstract any element in the universe is the less of reality it possesses. The concrete thing in Nature is more real than its abstract qualities. The self is more real than any element in its experience. It includes its whole panorama and is more real than any abstracted part of that panorama. Substance is more real than quality and subject is more real than substance. The most real of all is the concrete totality, the all-inclusive Universal. The progression which is thus brought to light is simply that which moves from the abstract to the concrete, from the partial to the all-inclusive.

Now this whole movement is a process of unification. The material substance unifies the multiplicity of its qualities. The spiritual self-conscious subject unifies the multiplicity of experience. Finally, the ultimate concrete totality unifies the multiplicity of all experiences, that is, of all persons. Philosophy, which is simply systematic human thought, can carry us safely to the second of these three stages, but it cannot ascend to the final synthesis. But it must not dare, for that reason, to deny that there is a final synthesis. It must not presume to assert that there is not a

point of view from which unification is complete, that there is no such thing as the ultimate concrete totality. To make this assertion would be to stultify itself and abandon all it has been able to gain. The faith that there is in the end a perfect harmony, that all must be one at the last, is the pole-star by which intelligence has been guided through all its wanderings, the alpha and omega of all thinking and living. And now, because that faith cannot be converted into perfect vision, is all that has been won by hard conflict to be thrown away in a rage? One thing philosophy is able to say about the final unification. It is the most concrete of all. What does that mean? It means that the union into which the otherwise discrete elements are brought, is the most intimate of all unions. Just as the unity established among the elements in experience by the self is more intimate than that established among qualities by their inherence in a common substance, so must the unity into which persons are brought by their subjection to the final synthesis be more intimate than the unity of experience. The movement from abstract to concrete means also a movement from less intense to more intense unification.

The final superpersonal unity is, therefore, the most intimate of all unities. It is the perfect, the absolute, unity. It is a unity to which the unity of the ego bears no comparison, and for that very reason it is by us inconceivable. For us, there is no thinking on any other basis than that of the self-conscious subject or ego. When we essay to think the final unity we do so in terms of the unity which we ourselves possess. Our self-consciousness stands as the symbol of something far more concrete, more intense in its unifying virtue, than itself.[1]

Here then is the complete answer to the charge of tritheism. Instead of regarding the Divine Three as a group of persons, bound together merely by corresponding emotions or similarity of purpose, our view regards the ultimate unity in which they coexist as so intimate, so intense, that even the unity of personality can yield no conception of it.

And here it is necessary to be careful lest there should be misunderstanding. This faith

[1] "Quod sane mirabiliter ineffabile est, vel ineffabiliter mirabile, cum sit una persona haec imago Trinitatis, ipsa vero summa Trinitas tres personae sint, inseparabilior est illa Trinitas personarum trium, quam haec unius" (Augustine, *De Trin.*, bk. xv., c. 23, § 43).

in a final unity, which is the most real and most concrete of all realities, is not to shake our faith in our own personal reality. It must never be forgotten that the self is the source of the whole distinction between the real and unreal. For man there can, strictly speaking, be nothing more real than the self. So also the self is the source of the distinction between the abstract and the concrete. Human thought knows nothing more concrete than the self. Any doctrine, therefore, which makes the self unreal or abstract must be rejected. How then can the ultimate unity be more real and more concrete than the self, as it must be if it is to be the unifying principle of the whole multitude of selves?

The answer is that we are justified in attributing reality and concreteness to the final unity in the very strictest sense of these terms, because it cannot be less real or less concrete than the self. But at the same time we recognise the insufficiency of these conceptions. They are true and sound so far as they go, but they are not ample enough. How then shall be described that most characteristic distinction of the final unity by which it surpasses the self and makes all selves to be one? The resources of language

and thought fail us here, and all we can do is to take the relation in which the self as unifying principle stands to elements lower than itself in the scale of reality and make this relation a symbolical representation of the relation (let the term be used with the necessary reservation) which the final unity bears to the self.[1] And so we say the final unity is the concrete universal, it is the most real of all; for these are the only expressions we can suitably use, while we are fully conscious of their inadequacy. God is then, in His ultimate nature, superpersonal; that is, He is personal and more than personal. He is superrational; that is, He is rational and more than rational. And at the same time, the human self is not to be denied personality, rationality, reality, concreteness, using these terms with the meaning which properly belongs to them.

This is a doctrine of Monotheism of the strictest kind. It attributes to God, not a mere numerical unity, nor yet the abstract unity of an all-pervading principle. For it, God is not one person among many, nor is He a mere Life or Soul of the universe. In contrast with all

[1] This is the philosophical justification of the Augustinian doctrine. See p. 212.

Henotheistic and Pantheistic ideas, He is the concrete, Universal One, Who, though all-inclusive, yet secures to each finite person the full possession of his individuality.

In what sense can God be said to be love? This question is a profoundly interesting one; not merely because of the wonderful utterance of St. John, but because of the place which love occupies in Christian ethics. Love sums up the commandments. It expresses our proper relation to God and our proper relation to our fellow-men. It is also declared to be the nature of God, and the means of our communion with Him. "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him."

It must be obvious that if love is all this, it is more than a mere emotion. The emotion, surely, gives its name to a type of character. And this type of character is the one which corresponds to the truth of the Divine Nature. In fact, if the words "God is love" contain a revelation concerning God, they also contain a revelation concerning love. The basis of love, that which gives it its very being, is an intrinsic unity subsisting among persons. Love either recognises such a unity as already existing or

strives to attain to it: and such strife is the implicit recognition of its necessity. In the case of human souls love rises to this recognition by an act of faith. It can never prove the accuracy of its first intuition nor ever arrive at a perfect verification. None can prove, with scientific demonstration, the fidelity of his friend. Love is for human beings a venture of faith across the abyss which separates soul from soul. But we cannot suppose that, for God, there is this element of uncertainty. The union of spirits which is the truth of love is for Him the greatest and most certain of all realities. It is indeed His essence. God is one, with the final and most perfect unity, just because He is the Universal Being in whom the opposition of spirit to spirit is completely overcome. This is the true *Homoousion*. His unity is superpersonal and multipersonal, and because it is so, it is, from the highest point of view, the ultimate and absolute unity. And this truth finds its most adequate expression in the sentence, "God is Love". For what human love strives to accomplish, the overcoming of the opposition of person to person, is perfectly attained in the Divine Unity.

And the application of this principle to human

life, which the apostle proceeds to make, is equally profound. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him." The man who dwells in love is the man who lives consistently in accordance with the rule that there is no conflict between his own private personal good and the good of others; the man who develops that type of character which ever seeks the end which will bring blessing, not merely to himself individually, but to all men; the man who lives in the faith that the supreme purpose of the universe, the end which God has in view, is universal good, and who identifies himself with that great purpose. Such a man dwells in God, because by an act of faith he has been able to rise above the opposition between self and self, he has been able to reconcile egoism and altruism. He lives in the confidence that there is a final unity in which all persons are ultimately harmonised. By faith, he has entered into the life of God.

There is an element of faith, an element of mysticism, in all ethical theory and practice. This truth has not received the attention it deserves. But it can scarcely be possible to doubt it, for there are not many who will be

found rash enough to assert that the question, why should the moral commands be obeyed, has received a perfect answer in the terms of any school of ethical philosophy. To the intuitionalist, conscience is an object of faith. He believes where he cannot prove. To the Hedonist, the superiority of one kind of pleasure to another, and regard for the pleasure of others, are principles which must be more or less recognised, but which cannot be reduced to the terms of mere pleasure. To the ethical rationalist, reason is a source of practical principles which must be taken as they stand, and which cannot be justified by reference to the scientific intelligence. Finally, the Eudæmonist school, as it is sometimes called, the school which derives its leading principles from Aristotle in ancient times and from Hegel among the moderns, has to answer one great question above all others: how can self-realisation be the realisation of others? Why must the true good be always the common good? Why is the end of each the end of all?

To say that this question has ever been answered without in some way or other making a venture of faith would be to show but a feeble understanding of the meaning of the literature

which deals with it. What is required is a principle of unification for the multitude of persons, by which the true end of each one, the good in which he is to be realised, may be seen to be inseparably united with the good of all the others: so that when a man aims at his own true end he aims at that which is in harmony with the mind and character of God and with the well-being of his fellows.

Green attempted to find such a unification in the conception of a spiritual principle which reproduces itself in all human beings. For him the principle is one, its manifestations are many. The unity of the principle provides an absolute good, an end which is one and the same throughout all manifestations. It is now generally recognised that this solution cannot be considered satisfactory. It attains unity by the sacrifice of the finite individual; or, if that be denied, by the reduction of the universal spiritual principle to a mere abstraction.[1]

The Hegelian solution depends upon a distinction between the individual and the person. As individual, man is finite and particular. As person, man is universal. The maxim "Be a

[1] See Introduction, pp. 26, 27.

person" lifts man as a moral agent into a position of universality and so gives him an absolute end. We have already seen that it is impossible to reach, by means of any such device as this, a position of true universality. What is required is a concrete universal which will unify all persons, and to that human intelligence cannot attain. Such a universal is only to be gained by a venture of faith, a venture which must be made when it is found that both on the speculative and on the practical sides we are driven into a position in which we have to choose between utter spiritual disintegration and frank acceptance of God as the ultimate concrete unity. Thus the mystical element in ethical theory is found to correspond with the mysticism of religious faith.

The subject which is thus forced upon us is one of very great importance. What is the place and function of mysticism in theology? It is safe to say that there is no school of religious thought which does not somewhere or somehow fall back upon conceptions and expressions which are essentially mystical. But as this is generally done as a mere matter of convenience, or at least without laying down any principle to show

when mysticism is permissible, or defining the limits within which it is possible, the result is somewhat confusing. So much so that it is often very difficult to say whether a writer intends his words to be taken in a strictly scientific or in a mystical sense; or indeed whether he has ever even thought of asking himself that important question.

The position we have now attained enables us to see what constitutes mysticism, in the sense in which it is permissible in theology. It is not, as the profane often suggest, the art of putting words in the place of things. Nor, on the other hand, is it the use of concepts in their strictly accurate signification. It is rather the effort to reach a spiritual fact by means of a concept which is confessedly inadequate. It assumes that there are truths which are greater than human thoughts. It also assumes that these truths are not wholly inaccessible to thought. Thought cannot grasp them and contain them in their fulness within its categories. It can only throw out certain forms which represent them imperfectly, but which are nevertheless infinitely better than no representation at all. These efforts to express the inexpressible

are not false. They are true as far as they go, but they are not true enough to contain the full description of the facts with which they deal.

This may be called the new mysticism, for its method is essentially different from that employed by the old mystics. They sought truth and reality in the most abstract of all notions. They attempted to approach God by emptying the mind of all content and then striving to grasp the thought of mere abstract being.[1] The new mysticism acts in a way which is the very opposite. It seeks to understand Divine things by means of the richest and fullest of human thoughts. But even these are found to be inadequate. They cannot fully comprehend God. They are not, however, altogether inapplicable. Though they do not yield a perfect knowledge, they afford what is, for us, the truest of all truths, and make possible the life of religion and practice.

Mysticism is not confined to theology. Its sphere is immensely larger than is generally imagined. Poetry, romance, all the allusive kinds of literature are full of it. But it is to be found more especially in all efforts to express

[1] See E. Caird, *Evolution of Religion*, vol. i. p. 148.

the relations between persons. Language which deals with such relations has always an element of mysticism, for the very idea of *relation* as subsisting between spirits is mystical. The term relation expresses the principle by which all the parts of any experience are connected together. When it is applied to that which, in its fulness, cannot enter experience, the use is mystical.

We speak of knowing a person. But when we ask what is the meaning of the word *knowledge* in this connexion, it is not easy to give an answer. It certainly does not mean knowledge in the scientific sense. It is not knowledge of the kind which grasps a set of abstract propositions. It is not even knowledge of the kind which apprehends a concrete thing. When we speak of knowing a person we in truth refer to a series of experiences many of which are quite indefinable in epistemological terms. We mean that mind has met mind, affection has responded to affection, will has encountered will, expectation has been fulfilled or disappointed. And the total result we call the knowledge of the person. Yet we are conscious all the time that there is an inner secret recess of character which, with all our experience, we have been unable to penetrate.

For all practical purposes, we may be confident as to our "knowledge". We may say: "I know such a man, he will not deceive me". Yet, in spite of our confidence, we may be mistaken; and, in no case, can we *prove* the accuracy of the estimate. The word knowledge then, as applied to persons, is a mystical expression. It describes the effort of the mind to grasp an object too great for it. But it is not, on that account, a misuse of language, for it refers to a set of experiences which, though they are more moral than mental, have for us the value of knowledge in our practical life and social relationships.[1]

Another notable instance of the same kind is the word *love*. Properly it is only applicable to a relation between persons. But here, even in its own proper domain, it is essentially an effort to express the inexpressible. To describe it as a mere feeling is almost ridiculously inadequate. To turn to any psychological treatise and read what science has to say of love is to enjoy a smile of amusement at the vain floundering of accurate propositions in their effort to grasp what is beyond them. Here a line of poetry has more truth in it that a volume of psycho-

[1] See Illingworth, *Personality, Human and Divine*, lect. v.

logy. Only mysticism can deal with such an object. Mere understanding suffers paralysis. In the words of a great metaphysician, "To love unsatisfied the world is a mystery, a mystery which love satisfied seems to comprehend. The latter is wrong only because it cannot be content without thinking itself right."[1] Love has faith in a unity of persons, a unity which is more than similarity of feeling or joint experience or mutual suitability of mind and character. If it were merely these, it would be a case of mutual convenience and only another name for selfishness. It would be, that is, not love, but its opposite. Love believes where it cannot prove and express its faith in the language of mysticism.

In all mysticism, then, there is an element of faith. There is the daring leap of thought towards something which is only partially within the reach of thought.

If the language which expresses our relations to our fellow-men is thus essentially mystical, how much more so must be that which expresses our relations to God. All the most fruitful conceptions which religion has been able to evolve

[1] F. H. Bradley in Preface to *Appearance and Reality*.

and theology to employ are more or less mystical. The Fatherhood of God is an excellent case in point. No theological idea has been more fruitful than this. It has proved as valuable in theology as it is precious in religion. And how obviously is it an attempt to reach an object too great for thought by means of a conception which is confessedly inadequate. The human thought reaches out to an object which it knows it cannot include in its grasp, but which it also knows it can cling to as a great reality. Indeed, a great part of the value of this particular conception arises from the fact that it is the conscious application of the lesser to the greater. The dear familiar language of earthly relationship can be applied in a true and admissible sense to the Infinite. If that be so, man has gained enormously. But why? Not merely because God is his father, but because his father is God. The Being whom he dares to call by the human name is at the same time the measureless one for whom no name is great enough.

It would be possible to go through all the leading conceptions and to find in all a mystical element. The kingship of God and its complement the kingdom, the *ἐν τῷ χριστῷ* of St. Paul,

the whole idea of Divine Grace, are mystical conceptions in which the truth aimed at is always larger than the truth expressed. This mystical principle fills religion in its concrete manifestations. The outward visible signs represent spiritual facts which are not less but greater than words can make them to be. The essence of mysticism is that it expresses the greater by means of the less. The inner truth is always vaster than we know.

We have seen that language which describes the relations between persons is always more or less mystical, and that this is specially true of the relations between human persons and Divine persons. But mysticism, in the forms in which we have most frequently to deal with it, concerns more than the relations between persons considered as bare relations, if such consideration be possible. It concerns these relations viewed with reference to the final truth which underlies them all. The centre round which theological mysticism moves is the ultimate unity of the Godhead. It must not be forgotten that that unity must be, from the highest point of view, the ultimate truth, the last term of explanation, the beginning and end, the ἀρχή and τέλος of

all things. Theology can never wholly disregard it or reason as if it did not exist. Consequently, in all theological reasonings, there must be a point at which the final unity must be reckoned with and allowed for. Man's position in the universe is eccentric. God alone is at the centre. To Him only is the orbit of truth completely displayed. The illustration may be permitted, though it is almost misleading in its imperfection, because it compares the abstract with the concrete. It may help us to see, however, that there are circumstances in which, to us, the onward movement of truth may seem a retrocession. When this happens, mysticism is our only resource.

Now it is not too much to say that all the great mystical expressions of religion and theology are modes of approaching the final unity. When we speak of God as the Father we are thinking of Him as the source of all being. To suppose that, as mere person, He can be Father, is to deny the validity of the whole argument by which we have attained our present position. The One in whom we live and move and have our being as separate persons must be more than personal. When we speak of Christ as the only-

begotten Son who is one with the Father we are approaching in a more obvious way the same truth and still in mystical language. All the imagery which is used to represent the relation which Christ as Divine Son bears to His people, shadows forth various aspects of one truth. In all cases the mystical element will be found to correspond to precisely the same ultimate fact. In all will be found the idea of union in and with the Father by means of union in and with the Son; and the underlying fact of that union is always the unity of the Father and the Son. Christ includes His people just because He is one with the Father. To this ultimate unity everything else is to be traced back. The knowledge of the Father is through the Son, because the Father and the Son are one. "No one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him."[1] "I am the good shepherd," said Christ, "and know My sheep and am known of Mine, even as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father." "My sheep hear My voice and I know them and they follow Me; and I give

[1] Matt. xi. 27.

unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and none shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father which hath given them unto Me is greater than all; and none is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and the Father are one."[1] "I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you."[2] And again in the great prayer of Christ, "That they all may be one; even as Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us, . . . that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one."[3]

These extraordinary passages seem to represent the very centre of all Christian mysticism. They are a fuller statement of the truth which 1 John throws into the wonderful sentence, "God is Love". They find their expression in Pauline terms in the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians. The summing up of all things in Christ, the dwelling of the whole πλήρωμα in Him,[4] are but other ways of indicating the same range of ideas.

Throughout the whole New Testament may

[1] John x. 14, 15, 27-30.
[2] *Ibid.*, xiv. 20.
[3] *Ibid.*, xvii. 21-23.
[4] Eph. i. 10; Col. i. 19.

be traced the conception which regards Christ as the bond of union among His people. The fact that Christian people are one in Christ is the truth of a multitude of parables, similes, and practical exhortations.

The passages just quoted show very clearly that this function of the Son is regarded as belonging to Him, not as a separate person, but in His unity with His Father. It is just because He is one with His Father that all are one in Him. In other words, it is the Deity of the Son, the fact that He is superpersonal unity as well as personal which is the basal truth in all these instances. And these are among the most notable instances of mystical language in the New Testament.

It would be easy to show that the mystical language which is used concerning the Third Person is of the same character. One case will suffice. Christ said: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you desolate, I

come to you. . . . In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me and I in you."[1] Here again we find the unity of the persons the underlying mystery.

Thus we arrive at this very remarkable, and for us satisfactory, conclusion: the point where mysticism arises in Christian theology is exactly the point at which it inevitably arises in philosophy. When we attempt to rise above personality and to think out the relations between persons; above all, when we try to reach the position of concrete universality from which all persons should be seen to enter as elements into one great system, when we try, that is, to attain to the last great unification, we find ourselves baffled, and have to fall back upon mysticism, the representation of higher things by means of categories which form the true measure of lower things. We have to speak truth in terms which are true, but not true enough.

It may be thought that the conceptions which have come to light in the course of our investigation really lead to a conclusion quite different from that which has been presented. We have been guided to our conclusion by the fact that

[1] John xiv. 16-20.

it is impossible for thought to leap the barrier which separates mind from mind and reach a position of concrete universality as regards the multitude of persons. We have seen that it is also impossible to deny the existence of a highest point of view which unites all persons as elements in a completed system. The consequence of these two impossibilities is the belief in a superpersonal unity which our thought can describe only in terms which are largely mystical.

But it may be said, this final unity subsists, according to this argument, not among Divine Persons, but among human persons. We have arrived at belief in its existence, because ordinary human beings require to fall back upon some underlying principle of unification. It is therefore the unity, not of a Divine plurality, but of the human plurality. The persons in the Divine unity are the whole multitude of human persons. There is nothing to lift us to a higher level. All we have attained is a philosophical theory of the Absolute of a mystical kind. The Absolute is now conceived as the superpersonal unification of all human persons, a very different doctrine from the Christian Trinity, the three Divine Persons in One Substance.

The answer to this objection is that it attributes to our philosophy results which that philosophy never ventured to claim. We never pretended to reach a theological statement of the doctrine of the Trinity by means of philosophy. All we attempted to show was that the presuppositions on which philosophy is driven back are identical with those which underlie Christian theology. The fact that nature must be accepted as of the same texture with human experience implies the personality of the Reality which gives existence to nature, and the fact that personality is incapable of unifying the multitude of persons forces us to believe that the ultimate unity is superpersonal. The former yields belief in superhuman personality, the latter yields belief in a unity which *can* be multipersonal. We thus reach a doctrine of Divine Personality which does not pretend to be final; and a doctrine of Divine Unity which, in itself, is theologically a mere form awaiting an adequate content.

The fact that the principle of personality, known to us from its manifestation in ourselves, cannot unify the multitude of persons drives us to find the unification of that multitude in a higher principle. But it does not therefore follow that

the only function of that higher principle is the unification of the multitude of human beings. The existence of Nature as a great system of relations implying a personal self-conscious subject seems to indicate the existence of a more exalted plane of being on which the superpersonal unity realises the fulness of its concrete universality. And this indication becomes more suggestive still if the argument of lecture iv. be admitted, and it be granted that Nature reveals that blending of the contingent with the necessary which marks the presence and operation of agents personally distinct, but contributing equally to the realisation of the same design.

It is not pretended for one moment that the doctrine of the Trinity can be proved by philosophy. That doctrine in its Christian form could never have existed except for the revelation of the Divine which took place in the person, life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Son reveals the Father, and only through the Son can God be known as the Father. In knowing the Son we know the Father, and in knowing the Father we know the Son. The revelation which took place in Christ was the joint revelation of both. So is

it also with the revelation of the Spirit. It is only on the basis of the Christian revelation that we can found a doctrine of the Holy Ghost as the Spirit of Truth who guides the thought of the Christian ages, who teaches and imparts the mind of Christ, who takes of Christ and declares it to Christ's people.[1] It is only the thoughts which move within the circuit of the Christian revelation which find themselves compelled to fall back upon the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Or, in other words, it is only within the sphere of the Holy Ghost's influence that Father and Son in their mutual relation are revealed. "In that day," said Christ, speaking of the coming of the Paraclete, "ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you."[2] The Spirit makes the knowledge of the Father and the Son in their relation to one another and to men possible. And in this fact the Spirit's own existence and relation to both are implied. Thus Christianity itself may be regarded as the revelation of the Trinity, and apart from that revelation it is vain to seek for any proof of the doctrine.

[1] John xiv. 17, 26, and xvi. 13, 14.
[2] *Ibid.*, xiv, 20.

This seems to be undoubtedly the Christian position as explained by our Lord Himself and as understood by all the profounder minds among Christian theologians from the beginning.

The proof of the doctrine of the Trinity remains then, for us, where it has always been. It depends upon the Christian revelation. The doctrine comes to light whenever men accept the facts of the life of Christ and honestly and intelligently attempt to discover the theory of the Divine Nature which is implied in them. Or, in other words, the doctrine of the Trinity is the theoretical presupposition of the Christian religion.

Now, the contention of these lectures is that philosophy, when it deals fairly and fully with the facts of experience and of life, is driven back upon presuppositions which, though very much less definite, are of precisely the same kind. These presuppositions are so vague, so wanting in definite outline, as our philosophy yields them, that they form no doctrine sufficiently clear to be called a doctrine of the Divine Nature. They teach that God possesses personality, but in apparent inconsistency with this, they also teach that, in His ultimate nature,

He is superpersonal (and therefore possibly multipersonal) unity. Such conclusions would in themselves be valueless. They would be too puzzling to produce anything but intellectual despair. In the light of Christianity, however, they become full of meaning. For they receive a content which makes them adequate to the needs of man's nature. If there is any soundness in the line of argument we have followed, these presuppositions correspond to the demands of reason in its dealing with nature and experience; and if there is any meaning in human history they correspond, when they have received their Christian content, to the demands of the ethical and religious life.

There is, however, a larger and more satisfactory way of grasping these conceptions. It is being felt in many quarters at present that the distinction between natural and revealed religion has been drawn far too sharply in the past. We have now reached a position in which we can see that, from the highest point of view, that distinction vanishes without in the least impairing the supernatural character of Christianity.

Philosophy, it is now generally conceded, is the effort to reach the presuppositions of experience.

Taking experience as given, the student attempts to reason back to the explanatory principles which underlie the whole range of facts. If he is successful, he discovers the conditions of the possibility of experience and his work is done. But what, we may ask, is Christian theology? Surely it is precisely the same method applied to the series of facts which is commonly spoken of as the Christian revelation. Theology does for the facts, that is, the events, teachings, etc., recorded in the Sacred Books, what philosophy does for the facts of perception, conception, volition, etc. For a time philosophy restricted too much the area within which it ventured to deal with facts. It acted as if it expected the discovery of the conditions of individual experience to provide principles equal to the explanation of all life and being, human, social and Divine. It is now becoming more and more evident that philosophy must take nature, human life, social life, history, in their widest extent, and seek the presuppositions of their possibility, if it is to reach principles which can truly be called philosophical. An adequate philosophy must exhibit in mutual relation the whole range of first principles implied in all human experience.

But, if this be so, must not philosophy deal also with that portion of history which we call the life of Christ? If Christ was born, lived, taught, acted, suffered, died, rose again, as we are told in Holy Scripture that He did, then His life is as much a subject for philosophical study as anything else in human experience. And the philosophical study of the life and person of Christ is only another name for Christian theology.

Thus Christian theology is brought into line with philosophy, and the connexion between the two and the theoretical principles they yield may from our point of view be roughly indicated in the following manner. Individual experience has for its first principle, its underlying implication, its presupposition, the ego, the self-conscious subject. When from the experience of the individual we advance to the consideration of nature as a series of relations independent of this or that human individual, we find it necessary to presuppose personality, selfness, as a world-principle. When again we advance to a strictly scientific examination of the world-series and find in it a blending of certain contingent elements of world-wide importance with the

necessary sequence of cause and effect, we seem to detect the presence and interaction of agents which are personally distinct, but united in aim. When, further, from the course of natural events we turn to history in the stricter sense of the term and seek to reduce to order the confused mass of details which marks the co-operation and conflict of the multitude of human persons, when we note especially the opposition of will to will, and the self-assertion of the individual which culminates in the existence of evil, we are driven to presuppose a superpersonal (and possibly multipersonal) unity in which all these personal oppositions are overcome, a unity which is too exalted for complete definition in terms of human intelligence, but which, as it is the highest, must be the most intense of all unities. Lastly, when we come to consider the facts which we call the Christian revelation, we find that the Christian consciousness has in its dealing with those facts been driven back upon a doctrine which, from its mystical character, has ever excited the greatest opposition: the doctrine of the Trinity, that in the Godhead there are three Persons, each of whom must be spoken of in terms which attribute to Him the fulness of

self-consciousness and self-determination, but that these three are One with a unity which is the final ground of all things; and that the character of this Divine Being is to be known through the person, life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is the Second Person incarnate.

It may be admitted at once that the meaning of the former stages in this upward movement of thought could not become clear except through the last. But that is no argument against the validity of the whole. It is always the way that the highest term in any series of ideas is the most illuminating. Every real advance in knowledge throws light on all that has gone before in the same line of progress. Only by means of the last things can we understand the first. The τέλος is the explanation of the ἀρχή. And the nearer to the τέλος any term is, the more light it gives.

Thus the distinction between natural theology and Christian theology is found to depend on the facts which are subjected to scrutiny. Examination of the ordinary facts of experience, of life, and of history, with a view to discover the underlying principles is the method of natural

theology. Examination of the events which happened at the greatest epoch in human history with a view to discover the ultimate truths implied in them is the method of Christian theology.

Prove me the events, the sceptic will say, and I will accept the theology. The proof of the events is not our business on this occasion. Some of the facts on which Christian theology builds are not events needing proof; the teaching, character and unique personality of Christ are given in the evangelical literature. Into that discussion, however, we cannot enter. For us, it is enough to note that if it be true, as we have endeavoured to show, that the philosophical interpretation of the facts recorded in the evangelical literature, in other words, Christian theology, supplies exactly the content required to fill out in a satisfactory manner the empty and otherwise meaningless form provided by natural theology, then we have seen reason of a very convincing kind for accepting the Christian position as a whole.

If this view be admitted, many things can be explained. It becomes evident why natural theology, though always attracting the attention of thoughtful men, proved so unsatisfactory. It

yielded no consistent doctrine of the Divine Nature. It seemed to reveal a personal God. Yet what was to be thought of a Person who created a world full of warring wills and irreparable evils, who is only one Person among many? Or, again, if God was regarded as Infinite Spirit, what account was to be given of His relation to the universe? Is He immanent in nature or does He stand outside as Creator? If the former, what is to be made of the creative epochs, the new beginnings; if the latter, is He to be regarded as a great mechanician who stands outside the engine he has made and interferes from time to time to set it right? Natural theology is in perpetual trouble on account of these perplexities. Only when it extends the sweep of its interrogation and, caring nothing whether it be called natural or Christian, includes in its examination the events and ideas of primitive Christianity, does it reach a synthesis which finds a place within the compass of the Divine unity for the existence and operation of the multitude of personal agents, and a means of harmonising the transcendent and the immanent functions of creative activity.

We are also able to understand why Christian

theology often failed to commend itself to the minds of those who devoted their attention to a purely philosophical study of natural theology. Philosophy, as we have seen, has not as a rule occupied all the ground to which it is entitled. In many cases it is content with seeking the conditions of knowledge. There are writers who practically identify philosophy and epistemology. Some have one philosophy for the individual and another for society, not seeing that philosophy, as the ultimate science, must give the principles which underlie the whole range of experience, individual and human. In this way, the most important question of all has failed to receive due consideration. That question is, personality having been shown to be the ultimate principle implied in knowledge and will, what account is to be given of society and history? The principle of personality unifies individual experience, but is not able to unify the multitude of persons, how then is the multitude of persons possible? If that question had received proper attention, it is not easy to see how natural theology could have avoided being driven back upon the Christian doctrine of God; if, that is, there is any soundness in the argument of these lectures.

The objections which we have already considered are closely connected with another which is sure to be made. It will be said, even if we believe in the Three Divine Persons in the Unity of the Godhead, yet, after all, the unity which we have been led to attribute to them is only the kind of unity which, according to our theory, subsists, and must subsist, among all human persons. We have been led to that unity by the necessity of supposing the existence of a principle capable of unifying the multitude of persons. It is this principle which is the ultimate unity of the Godhead. Yet, in it, all persons, human as well as Divine, find their bond of union. No matter then how intense, how concrete, that unity may be shown to be, it is still, when all is said, a unity in which we all share. In what sense can it be affirmed of the Divine Persons in which it cannot also be affirmed of the human?

This objection merits a fair consideration and demands a clear answer. But surely the answer has been given, if not explicitly, then implicitly. The human person is, from his point of view, a person and nothing more. He cannot rise to the absolute point of view and see all in one.

He attains final unity by an act of faith. When he approaches the final unity he has to take refuge in mysticism, he has to represent the greater by the less. Such limitation cannot be attributed to the Divine Persons. In what way the ultimate unity belongs to them, how they inhere in it and it in them, it is impossible for us to say. That the terms of consciousness or volition or feeling are equal to the expression of these relations (if the word be admitted) must seem most unlikely. For us, the only category we feel safe in applying is that of unity, with the understanding that the unity so attributed is more intense, more concrete, than any known to us. When the ancient theologians insisted on the term *Being*, *Essence* or *Substance* (*οὐσία*) they did the best which was possible under the circumstances, the best their language and range of philosophical conception could do for them. But from the standpoint of modern philosophy the term is hopelessly inadequate, especially in its English form. As we have seen, the idea of *Subject* is a far more concrete one than that of *Substance*. Yet, when we have gained it we have only reached the level of personality, the inadequacy of which in this

connexion has provided us with argument all through.

The objection with which we are now dealing also falls into the error which has been already pointed out as so likely to entrap the unwary. We do not profess to prove the truth of the Christian doctrine by means of philosophy. If that doctrine is to be proved, it must rest upon the facts of the Christian revelation. But, granting that those facts demand the doctrine, our argument claims to have shown that the presuppositions which underlie human experience, individual and social, are of a kind which derive meaning and fulness from it. The doctrine, in fact, demands the same presuppositions. It affirms the personality of God, and, further, attributes to Him a superpersonal unity. If our philosophical study has yielded these two conceptions as the last result of the criticism of experience, it has done all we need ask of it in order to identify the presuppositions of Christianity with those of experience. The details, so far as they are possible for us, must be filled in by theology which is definitely Christian, which is founded, that is, on the facts of Christ's life and teaching.

There is one side of theological thought which claims attention before we bring our brief discussion of this great question to a close. The distinction between transcendence and immanence as characteristic of the various conceptions of Deity is much before the mind of the present day. Transcendence was the favourite doctrine of the eighteenth century, assented to at once by the Deists who denied Christianity and by the Apologists who answered them. For Paley, God was the maker who constructed the world, with infinite wisdom adapting means to ends. For Butler, He was the "intelligent author of nature, and natural governor of the world". The thought, in each case, is that of the Deity as a great wise Person who made the world and who rules it, but who stands outside it, and in that sense transcends it. As the engineer transcends the machine which he has constructed, so does God transcend the universe.

Immanence was the doctrine of the Pantheists, and in a sort, of the Alexandrian Fathers, and is the favourite conception of the present day. According to it, God dwells in creation; nature, human life, the universe, are, in all the phases of their continuous existence, the life of God.

This doctrine finds comfort in St. Paul's teaching: "In Him we live and move and have our being". Immanence is conceived in many ways, and varies in accordance with the range of philosophical thought possessed by the person who makes it his creed. In the case of some, it almost approaches materialism. God is conceived as a universal force to the agency of which everything can be referred. This view is rendered plausible by the fact that almost everything in the material world can be expressed in terms of force. In other cases God is the infinite Substance; or, He is universal Will, *will* being easily substituted for the *force* of the more materialist theory. For most modern idealists, God is the universal subject. His is the self-consciousness presupposed by the whole vast system of relations which we call nature. This view of immanence has to face the difficulty of reconciling the subjectivity of human individuals with the universal Divine subjectivity.

The best known attempt to solve that problem is Green's. According to him, the one eternally complete spiritual principle reproduces itself in all finite persons. The whole history of the

universe is, according to this, the life of God. The one great Spirit lives out His life in the lives of all men. There can be no doubt that this doctrine is an immense advance upon the doctrine of the pantheistic substance. The substitution of *subject* for *substance*, for which we are indebted in the main to Hegel, marks one of the most important upward movements in the progress of philosophical thought. Every mind which has been able to take this step has left materialism far behind. That terror threatens no more. The attempt, however, to make the self-conscious subject a truly universal principle has not, as we have seen at sufficient length, been a success. There are now but few, even of Green's own disciples, who profess to be satisfied with his method of reconciling the Divine and human; and the attempts which have been made to extract a more satisfactory solution from Hegel have not produced much except confusion of thought. The consequence is that a reaction has set in against the supremacy of the subject, and ingenious minds have laboured hard to apply to that principle a psychological solvent. But every such effort must fail, for each operation in the psychological analysis is the work of the

very thing which is supposed to be under examination. You can neither construct nor dissect the subject without assuming the subject. All the processes of psychology take place, in fact, within the subject and therefore can never explain the subject. In all such reasonings the subject is presupposed. No progress can be made in that way. The truth is that when the ascent from substance to subject was made, a definite advance in thought took place which no amount of verbal or psychological juggling can ever undo. A new and higher principle of explanation was reached and there can be no going backwards. The higher must explain the lower and not otherwise.

In these lectures an effort has been made to point out what seems the only possible method of further advance. We cannot get beyond the subject unless we can become something higher. But to do this would be to become more than human. All we can do is to assume the existence, in the manner already indicated, of a final superpersonal unity in which the personal multiplicity of the universe finds its principle of harmonisation. The question now occurs, is this a doctrine of immanence? Immanence means a Divine

indwelling in the universe. But the indwelling can be thought of in many ways. It can be regarded as the indwelling of a substance, or a force, or a will, or a self-conscious subject. None of these corresponds to the doctrine of these lectures. The last has a partial correspondence, for we believe that the personality of God is implied in the great system of relations which we call nature. In so far then as God is personal, He is immanent in nature as self-conscious subject. Just as man is immanent in his own experience, so the Divine subject is immanent in the great experience called nature.

In lecture iv. we saw reason to believe that the blending of necessity and contingency in nature marks the interaction and joint operation of distinct personal agents in the Godhead. If this be so, then we must surely discern here transcendence as well as immanence. The Person whose agency introduces elements which relatively to another are contingent, transcends the cosmos of the other in the same sense in which the Deist's God transcends the world in which he interferes. But there is a further and higher sense in which this is a doctrine of transcendence as well as a doctrine of immanence. The ultimate super-

personal unity which belongs to God and which is the highest thought we can attain to, even by the help of mysticism, implies that God, in the final truth of His Being, transcends, not merely nature but spirit.

At the same time, it seems to be true that the word *transcend* has reference here rather to our faculties than to God's nature. It would seem that, in the last resort, the distinction of transcendence from immanence must vanish, for God is Himself, in the truest and fullest sense of the term, the all-inclusive. To suppose otherwise is to suppose that God is not all in all. It is to suppose that there stands outside God, in permanent and hopeless opposition to Him, a domain of being that He cannot bring into subjection to Himself; and this is to suppose that God is less than Divine. In reasoning thus, we do not identify God with the universe. For the term universe stands, not for the concrete totality outside of which nothing can be, but for the collection of things and people in space and time. This universe is of course transcended by God, just because it is not the true all-inclusive whole. The concrete totality cannot be transcended simply because it is all-inclusive. If it is not

God, then it is more than God, it is greater than He. Our doctrine then is a doctrine of transcendence as regards God's relation to the universe, if that term be used in its commonly accepted sense to mean the world of nature and the whole collection of personal beings. This universe God transcends, and that in a far more distinct way than any other doctrine of transcendence would lead us to believe. For here we think of God as ultimately superpersonal. He transcends human history more completely than spirit or person transcends the world of matter. But when we think of the all-inclusive totality outside of which there can be nothing, we must hold a doctrine which may be called immanence. For this totality is only another name for God Himself. And therefore we say, not in poetic metaphor, but in truth: "In Him we live and move and have our being".

But while we must in this highest sense identify the totality of being with God, we must be careful to distinguish our doctrine from pantheism. Pantheism identifies God and the world. It is a doctrine of immanence in the lower sense. According to it, the life of God is the life of the material world with all its things

and living creatures and people. If it can be shown that all these elements are capable of a spiritual interpretation, then it follows that God is spiritual from one point of view and material from another. For this doctrine, God attains self-consciousness in man. During the long ages of early cosmic history, before man appeared on the earth, God did not know Himself. His intelligence worked unconsciously. The human spirit then is to be regarded as a phase in the life of God, truly a most important phase, but nevertheless a phase merely. One which has come and which will doubtless go.

Pantheistic doctrines vary, but they are all very much of this character. God is simply a name for nature considered as a whole, whether interpreted materially or spiritually. All thought of God as eternal Father, eternally wise and good and loving, and exalted above nature, becomes impossible. There can be no doubt that Hegelianism in its ordinary form tends to become pantheistic. It emphasises the idea of development according to a logical process. The self-evolution of spirit is its account of natural as well as human history. It is true that, for Hegel, the logical process is not essentially a

time-process. The whole logic is immanent in every element of the world as well as in the entire series of events which we call the history of the world. Primeval star-mist involves the fulness of the Divine Spirit as much as the mind of the philosopher. It is scarcely correct therefore to label all Hegelianism pantheism and so dismiss it. But there can be no doubt that when the principle of logical evolution is applied to the time-process, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the fulness of the Divine Spirit is involved in each element in that process in the same way that an end is involved in each stage of the whole succession of events by which it is brought about; and that, therefore, from the temporal point of view, God is the εἰς ὄν and exists now only in so far as the temporal process has enabled Him to realise Himself. Or, in other words, God is only as He exists in creation and in man, and the most Divine thing in the universe is simply the best of men. Such a doctrine is strenuously denied by many Hegelians. It is, however, the kind of thought into which Hegelianism tends to pass, and it is, to all intents and purposes, pantheism.

It has been necessary to point out this form

of theory in order to show how distinct from every kind of pantheism is that mode of presenting the Christian doctrine which we have seen reason to adopt.

We believe in the personality of God. We also believe in His superpersonal unity. Both beliefs save us from every form of pantheism. We believe in the personality of God, because we hold that nature, the world of things and events in space and time, exists independently of this or that human thinker, and is yet of such a character that in every detail it demands a self-conscious subject, a person, to make it possible. The primeval star-mist had its being because it existed in the consciousness of God. God in the fulness of His personality existed therefore prior to all creation. Also, as personal, He is no more to be identified with nature than a man is to be identified with his experience. Nor, as person, is He any more immanent in nature than the self in man is immanent in the man's experience. Just as much and just as little.

Further, God is superpersonal unity. And, as we have seen reason to believe, He is multipersonal unity. That seemed to us the most

reasonable interpretation of the blending of contingency with necessity which may be detected in the history of creation (see lecture iv.).

Now this higher unity, if it means anything, means that God is exalted above the world; and not merely above the world, but also above the whole multitude of persons. As man is exalted above nature by his possession of self-consciousness, so is God exalted above man by His superpersonal unity. Man's self-consciousness enables him to be the unifying principle of the whole cosmos of his experience, and hence it is that he stands above that cosmos. So God's superpersonal unity enables Him to be the unifying principle of the multitude of spirits and exalts Him above that multitude. Our doctrine then, if from one point of view it can be described as a doctrine of immanence, is also as much a doctrine of transcendence as any doctrine can be, and is far removed from every form of pantheism.

It may perhaps seem strange that we have not attempted to develop a doctrine of the Logos, in accordance with that old Greek theology which has of late years again become popular. It might be expected that an effort would be

made to show that the regular course of nature is guided by an immanent reason which must be distinguished from the source of being, the πηγὴ θειότητος. But, in truth, we have not got far enough in the development of our doctrine to enter with any fulness into the discussion of that question. In lecture iv. we were led to a view of creation which derived from the teachings of science the necessity of attributing the cosmic process to the joint operation of distinct Divine Persons. The culmination of the whole series of creative epochs in the coming of Christ seems to render that view not merely possible but probable. At the same time it is put forward in a tentative way only. And, on that account, there is a natural hesitation in basing upon it any more detailed elaboration of doctrine concerning the methods of creative activity.

Perhaps, however, it is worth while to consider how this view works out in connexion with the conception of Christ as the Logos through whom God made the worlds.

If nature formed one unbroken series of necessary events, if there were no breaks, no epochs which relatively to the rest of the series were contingent, then we should have to regard the whole

system of natural things as due to one spiritual principle, strictly, to one person. Reason would be immanent in every part of nature in the same way that man's reason is immanent in every part of his experience. To suppose that this conception yields a doctrine of the Logos which can in any sense be called Christian is surely astonishing. The Logos which is thus found to be immanent in the world can be no more hypostatised apart from the self-conscious subject which makes the whole possible than man as Ego and man as Reason making his own experience can be erected into two separate subjects. The Reason in the latter case is identical with the Ego in the former. The view then which regards nature as one unbroken rational or necessary whole, and therefore as the work of the immanent Logos, must regard that Logos, not as a person distinct from, while one with, the ultimate Divine principle, but as identical with that principle. It is the πηγὴ θειότητος which wells forth in nature, and therefore nature is uniformly rational and self-explanatory from end to end. This view, in truth, must lead to Sabellianism, to the identification of the Father and the Son, if it is not, just for the

sake of theological convenience, to go far beyond all that is warranted by the criticism of experience on which it builds.

But the manner in which it regards the history of the world is not correct. Facts do not correspond with this view. The history of creation is not a regular unbroken series of necessary events. After all that has been written in the hope of explaining away the testimony of science, it remains clear that nature did not attain its present highly organised condition by a purely necessary evolution. Time after time at the great turning-points there intervened a contingent element. The most likely explanation of this blending of the contingent with the necessary has been shown to be the joint operation of distinct personal agencies which are ultimately one, one, that is, on a higher plane of being. We see then in cosmic history instance after instance in which a Personal Reason has intervened, and always, as pointed out in lecture iv., for the purpose of lifting the regular course of development to a higher level. This is the co-operation of the Son with the Father. The one is the guiding Reason and operating Agent of creation, the other gives being and necessity to

all things. The Son works within the bounds of the Father, and through the intervention of the former, the latter brings about the fulfilment of His great purposes. This view seems to attribute the material of creation to the Father and the shaping of that material with a view to the realisation of the highest purposes to the Son. But if this statement be allowed to stand, it must be understood that the material does not mean here matter in the ordinary sense of the term. It means that necessary succession of cause and effect which, in reality, forms the stuff of the world. Wherever there is natural existence, there the regular progression of necessary causation is taking place. This is the material which the Son uses that He may build the City of God. This is the great stream of Divine life for which He shapes a channel that it may flow in the way which corresponds to the higher unity of the Divine Being.

From the very beginning of Christian theology a great difficulty concerning the doctrine of the Logos made itself felt. Greek speculation presented the conception of the Logos as immanent Reason, a cosmic principle; while from Jewish sources came the thought of the Logos as the

Word of God, the going-forth of Divine power.[1] Under the teaching of St. John it was easy enough to identify the latter with the historical Jesus Christ. But the influence of Greek philosophy created a dualism which perplexed the early theologians for generations,[2] and the difficulty has reappeared in modern times with the new birth of Alexandrian thought. How is the immanent Reason to be identified with the historical Christ?

It would be impossible to enter into a discussion of this question either in its historical or in its speculative aspect. It is sufficient to point out that the conception of the creative function of the Logos to which we have been led is of the nature of a synthesis of the two opposing elements. The Son is the means of progress in creation. He is therefore the rationalising and integrating Agent, and this in such a way that He is inevitably personal and must be identified with the historical Christ. At the same time our view is

[1] See Gore, *The Incarnation of the Son of God*, lect. iii., § 5.

[2] See Harnack's *History of Dogma* on the Logos doctrines of Clement, Origen and Athanasius. In the two former the Logos is mainly a world-principle. In the third, the opposite conception begins to prevail. See especially vol. iv., p. 29.

in the most manifest harmony with the Jewish-Christian conception of the Word or Power of God.

Our doctrine has also the advantage of seeing in the Father in every case the source of being. The stream of necessity which forms the stuff of the world proceeds from Him. Here we recognise the personality of the Father. The Son takes His being from the higher superpersonal unity of the same source, and becomes the means by which that higher unity operates upon the stream of necessity with the aim of bringing into existence the moral and spiritual world of persons and their inter-relations, which corresponds to the higher truth of the Divine life in its multipersonal fulness. The co-operation of the Divine Persons produces the kingdom of love. The perfection of this kingdom is the goal to which their joint activity in creation is tending. In the kingdom of love, revelation teaches us to find the more peculiar sphere of operation of the Third Person.

This view of the relation between the Father and the Son seems to receive great support from such passages as the following: "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father".[1]

[1] Matt. xi. 27.

"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to accomplish His work."[1] "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."[2] "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."[3] "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad"[4] (Abraham's life marked a turning-point in the history of the human race). "We must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. When I am in the world, I am the light of the world"[5] (An epoch had come in which a certain work had to be accomplished). "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."[6] With this understanding of such passages agrees our Lord's sense, so frequently manifested, of the necessity of waiting for the right moment in which to act. In this respect He contrasted Himself with men: "My time is not yet come; but your time is always ready".[7] He came in "the fulness of time". It is characteristic of the Son that He acts at the great epochs of history, as

[1] John iv. 34. [2] *Ibid.*, v. 17. [3] *Ibid.*, v. 22.
[4] *Ibid.*, viii. 56. [5] *Ibid.*, ix. 4, 5. [6] *Ibid.*, xvii. 4.
[7] *Ibid.*, vii. 6.

contrasted with the regular course of events. The seed grows secretly, but there is One who sows it and who reaps. "So is the kingdom of God."[1]

Nor is this inconsistent with the well-known passages which have been used, in a rather indefinite manner, to prove the immanence of the Logos in the vague way in which that doctrine has usually been accepted. In the sentence "In Him were all things created,"[2] the reference is to distinct creative acts. And, in the later sentence, "all things have been created through Him and unto Him,"[3] it may surely be meant that those acts form a continuous series originating by His instrumentality and tending to Him as their end, *i.e.*, they are acts in which He realises Himself.

The phrases which seem unlike this view are those in which it is said: "In Him all things consist,"[4] *συνέστηκεν*, cohere; and "upholding (sustaining) all things by the word of His power."[5] Here undoubtedly the language of Alexandrian Judaism has been accepted by the Christian writers. But we are not bound to

[1] Mark iv. 26. [2] Col. i. 16. [3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*, i. 17. [5] Heb. i. 3.

interpret such language by the vaguer ideas of an old philosophy, if later ideas yield a fuller and more satisfactory interpretation. In the light of the conceptions which we have been able to form a fuller interpretation is available. The Son is the agent by whom increased organisation or unification is attained. Every creative act raises all the processes of nature to a higher level, a plane on which greater concreteness is brought about. In Him all things cohere. But surely the full meaning of these words is only grasped where we view them, not merely as characteristic of the Son's special office, but of His office in relation to the Father. It is by means of the Son that the Father brings the universe into harmony with Himself. Therefore the Son, in that higher aspect of His being in which He shares the supreme unity of the Father, is the bond of the universe, the principle of its unity and final perfection.

Thus we return to the thought of Love as the highest and fullest description of the Divine Nature which human language can provide. "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him."

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